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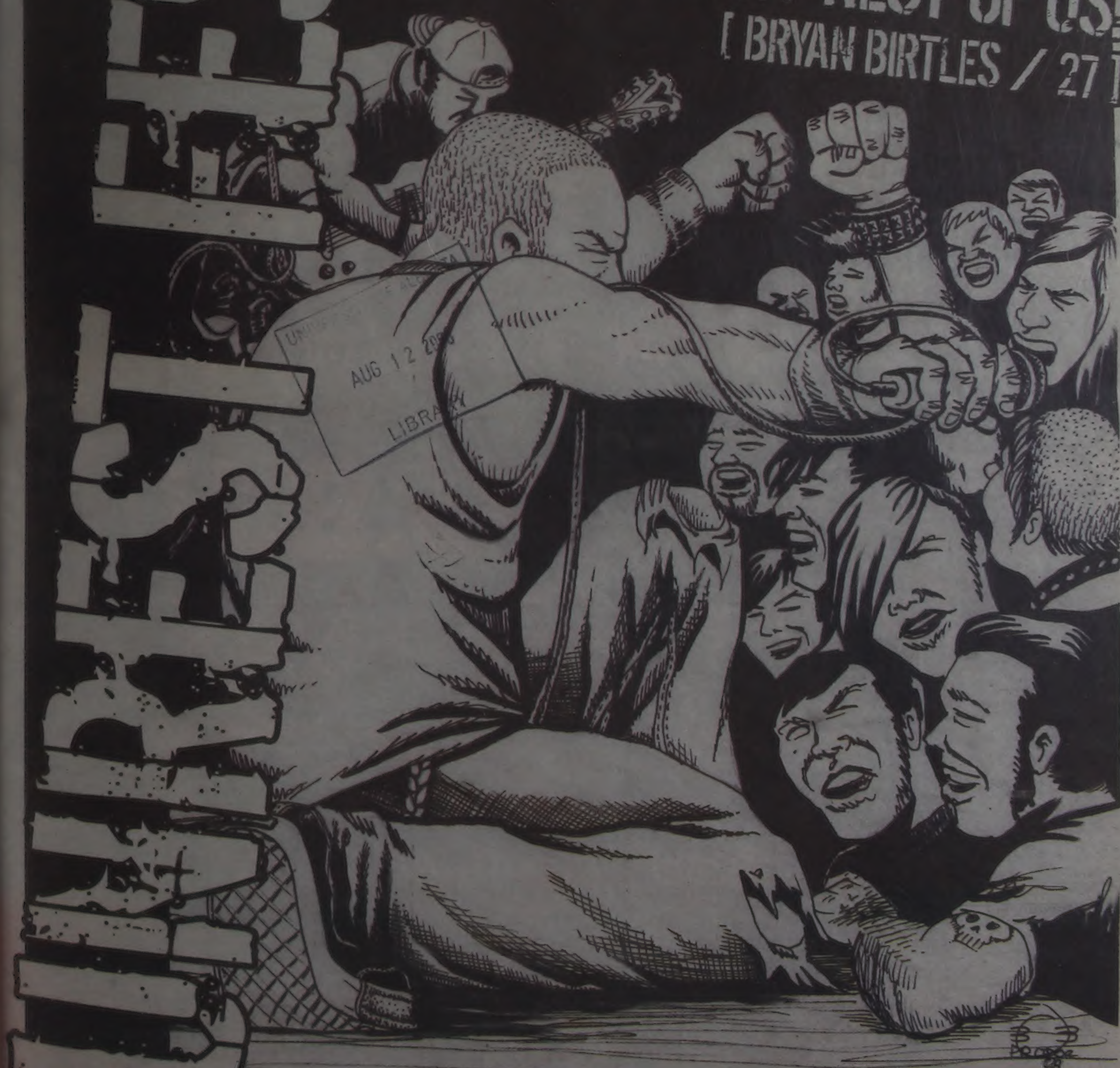
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#547 / JULY 27 - AUG 3, 2008
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VIEW WEEKLY

MUSIC FOR THE UN-REST OF US!
[BRYAN BIRTLES / 27]



FRONT: RURAL RESISTANCE / 7

ARTS: HARCOURT HOUSE / 18

FILM: THE WACKNESS / 22

UNREST FEST 2008

Edmonton, Alberta - Canada

August 3

Day 1 - 6pm

THE
Wednesday
NIGHT
HEROES

ANTI-NOWHERE
LEAGUE



IMPASTIE

ACHOLAU

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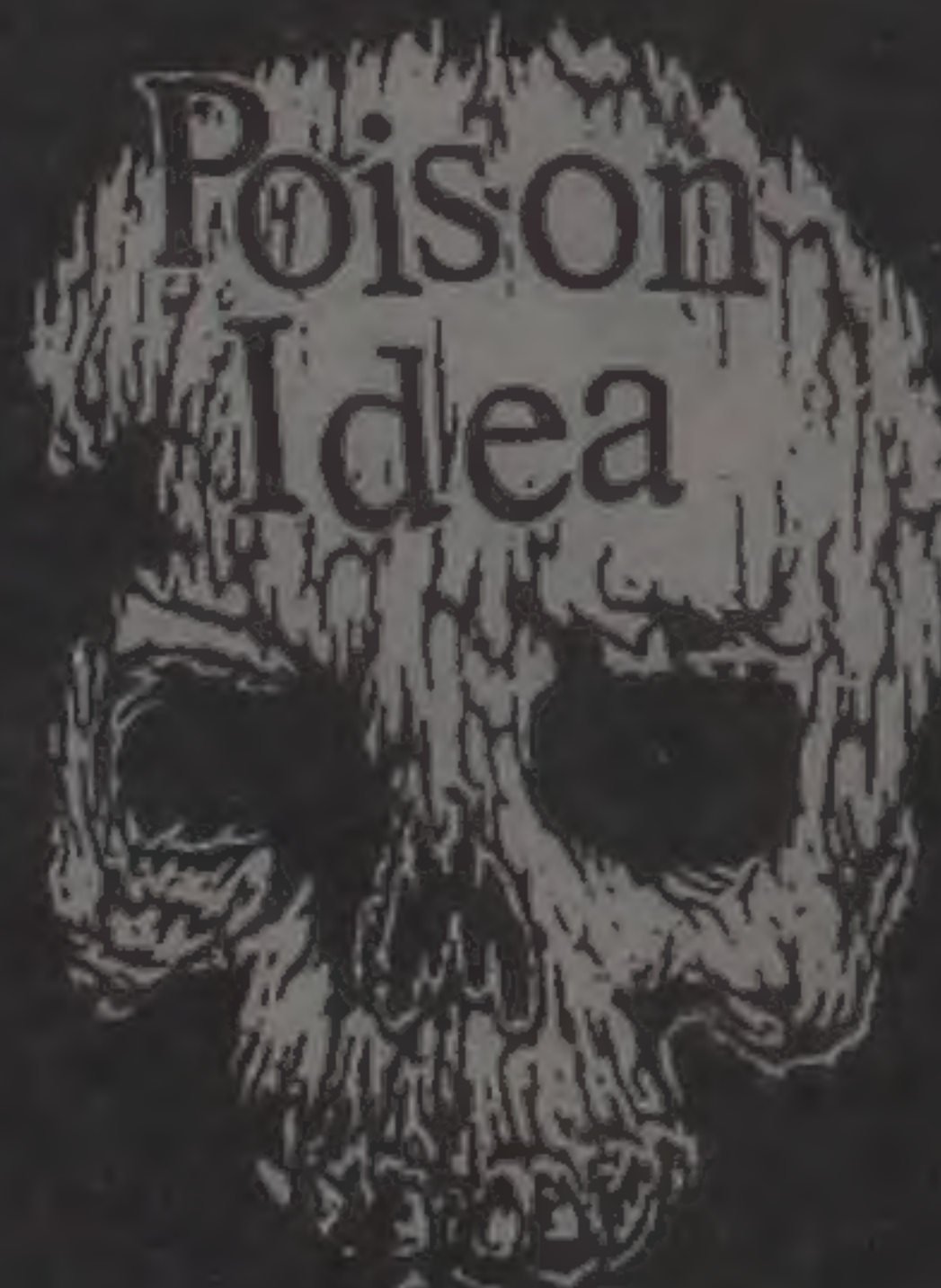
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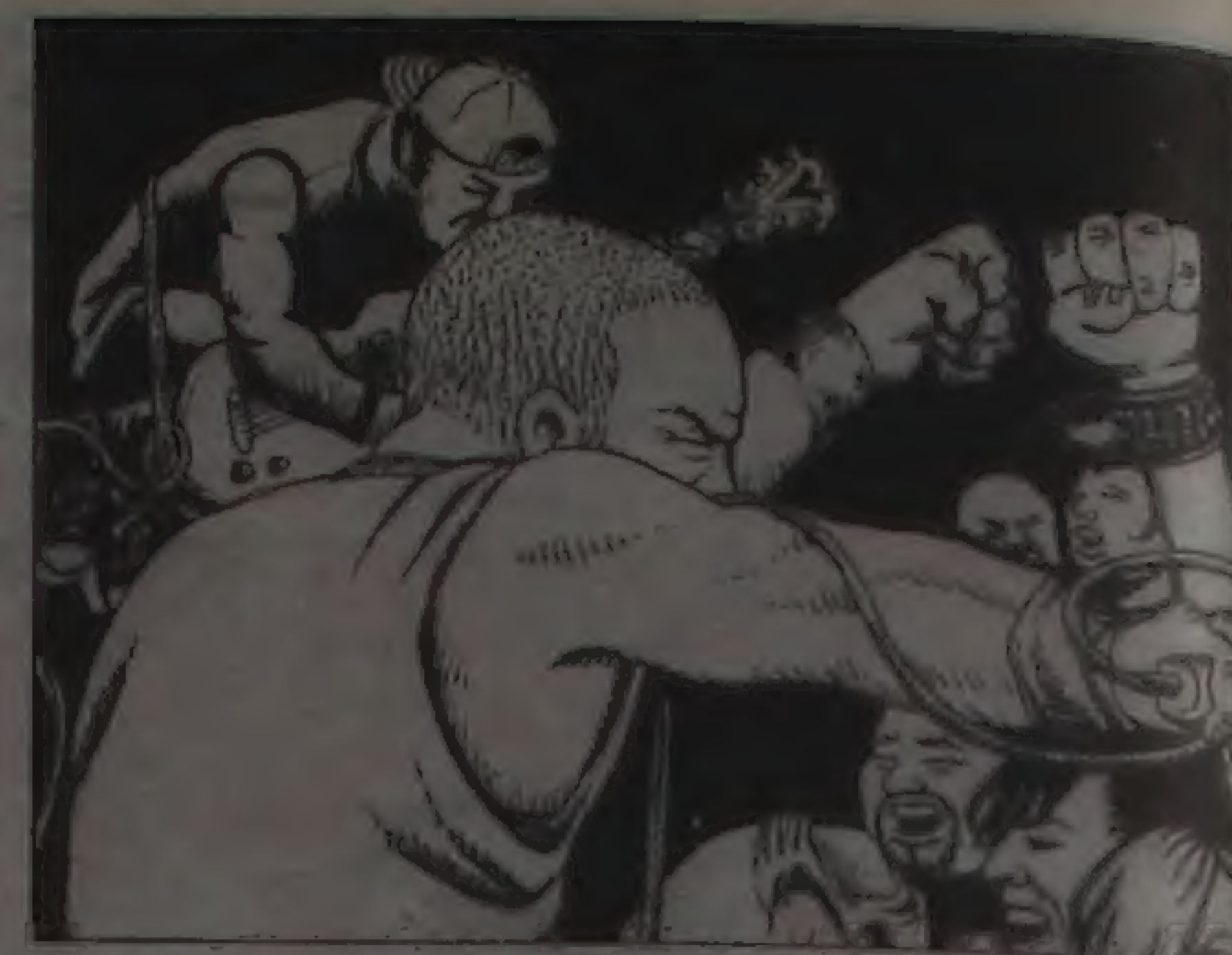
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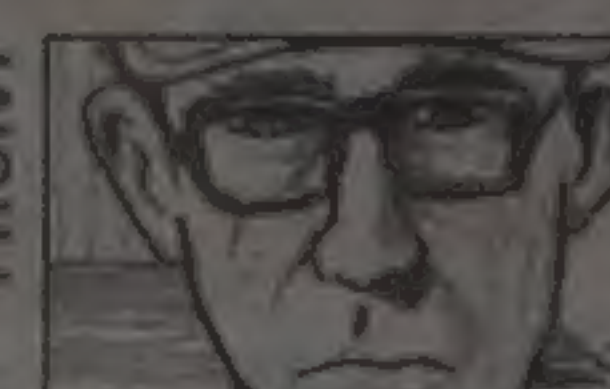
ON THE COVER



UNREST FEST

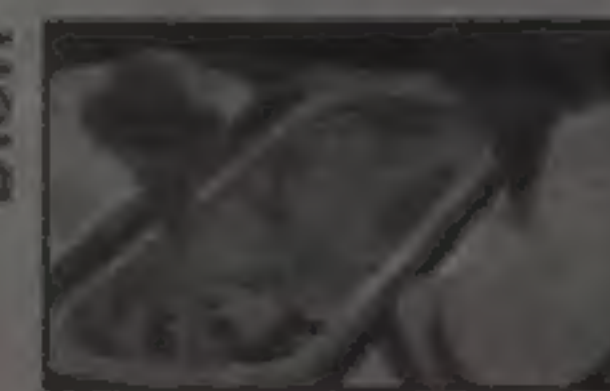
Edmonton label Unrest Records takes local bands global and
brings a few global ones back home for Unrest Fest.

FRONT



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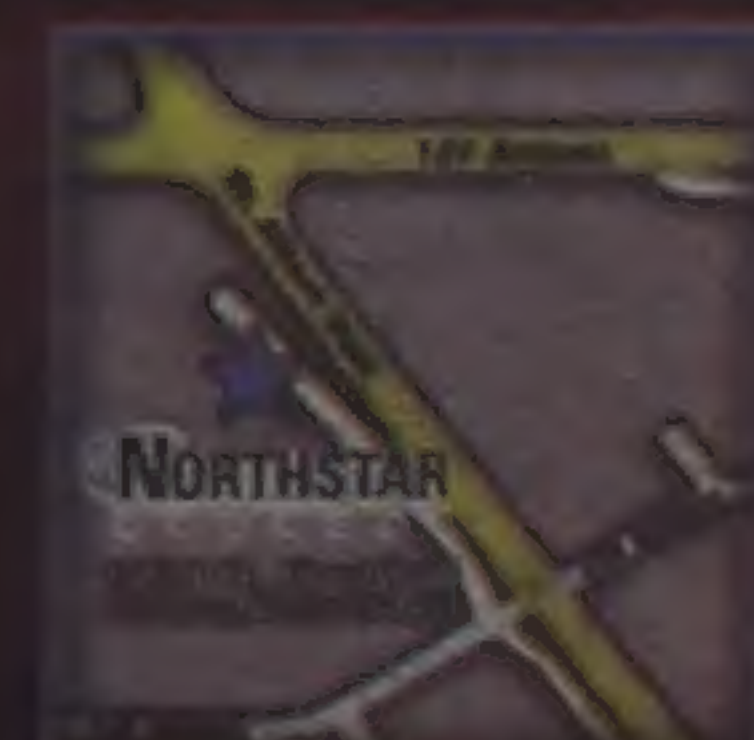
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Assessing our self-image

JAY SMITH / jay@vueweekly.com

Just say the words "Tommy" and "Douglas" and watch your average Canadian start the saccharine accolades. The words "Canadian" and "peacekeepers" have just about the same effect. Beneath the happy patriotic goo, however, some reassessment is needed.

Yours truly, per the always-hypochondriac advice of the Health Link line, went post haste to an emergency ward this past week because of sudden, intense pain in one of her eyes, and a correspondingly rapid loss of vision. Sound serious? Everything is relative. Hours of waiting in the aptly named waiting room, perusing a Chapters-Indigo-worthy magazine selection, makes one wonder about the value of an eye.

It's a bad sign when an elderly woman requests a blanket to go to bed, curled in the fetal position, in a waiting room chair. It's a bad sign when the man sitting next to you reveals he has driven his daughter in from Regina to get to this emergency room, since that's the only way she can see the specialist she needs (apparently out-of-province patients can only be accepted through emergency rooms). It's a bad sign when the woman on the other side of you says she believes she has appendicitis and she's been waiting for six hours.

Of course, the value of an eye, an appendix, an old lady, is relative. This week, Canadian forces in Afghanistan shot a giant round from a 25-mm cannon at a car that came too close to a Canadian convoy. The soldiers killed the two children, aged 2 and 4, in the car. The parents survived. Defence Minister Peter MacKay pointed out that 12 Canadians have died in suicide bombings. This, he says, "speaks to the despicable tactics of the Taliban, hiding among the civilian population."

What about the despicable tactics of the Canadian soldiers, hiding out in Afghanistan as peacekeepers, or nation-builders or whatever their present euphemism is? MacKay says the soldiers are "only human"—but so are Afghans. Twelve Canadians equals how many Afghans? So the patients, waiting out their lives in emergency rooms across Canada, appear blissfully lucky in comparison.

MacKay says, "difficult decisions had to be taken." All levels of government, it seems, should be making some more difficult decisions about what priorities we actually have, beneath the pomp of a peace-loving, healthcare-ful society. ▽



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MAIL LETTERS

AWWWW SHUCKS

The cover for this week's issue ("The Bestest of Edmonton," Jul 3 - Jul 9, 2008) is amazing! I just received the issue via email and read through the Bestest of Edmonton. As a former Edmontonian and now a Vancouverite, I really appreciate the up-to-date weekly issues I get via email. It keeps me posted on everything happening in my hometown/favourite city.

I also work in the magazine industry here on the West Coast, and I must say your website with all the new videos sure is impressive and also the fact that you send emails out the day before the issue is released is fantastic. Keep up the great work, Vue.

Read ya next time! (See how I did that, like I would have said, "See ya next time, but I can't ... I can only read ya!")

KRISTIN CHEUNG

IRAN STORY RIGHT ON

Congratulations to Shannon Phillips on a very well-written article ("Visiting the axis of evil: what you believe about Iran is probably wrong," Jul 10 - Jul 16, 2008). From my experience she got it right. Currently I work in Iran and I travel

back and forth on two-month consulting missions. I have pretty much all the perspectives she got from my working experience there.

I gain much insight due to doing some volunteer work at a language institute in my project city, which is Sari in Mazandaran (in the north of Iran). And perhaps because knowing English is a liberating capacity, many of my classes are with young women. They most often pine to get away to another country to be more free to express themselves. We choose topics for conversations and more than once we have chosen travel. It is interesting to hear them on where and why they want to travel. I have heard a goal to go to Disneyland, and to go to the beach in Turkey or Thailand/Malaysia and more frequently to just walk around without the head scarf.

The young are very fashion conscious and with their common physical beauty, they yearn to express their sexuality. The beach dream was so they could get a tan. I have spoken to a dad who takes his family, which includes daughters, to Thailand so they can go swimming, a no-no in the cover-up rigidity of Iran.

Another time when we spoke of sports, one person wanted to leave so she could ride a bicycle for sport and fitness. She had had a run in with the fashion police for wearing inappropriate clothing. So she can only ride at night but that is dangerous in the crazy traffic and of course any women proceeding at the side of the road at night in a black cloak is an accident

waiting to happen. The black covering is anti-human for personal safety alone.

Again, great piece and keep up the good work.

DOUG TAYLOR

ANTI-DRUG, NOT PRO-SAFETY

Connie Howard writes ("Progress on road safety requires complex solutions," Jul 10 - Jul 16, 2008) that the new drugged-driving law "maybe even deter marijuana use as a nice little side effect, earning us some brownie points with the US." Howard is correct. This law is not about safety, but a futile attempt to shape attitudes toward marijuana use. Conservative Senator Terry Stratton admitted as much when he said, "We are not after the person on prescription drugs ... We are after the people who are taking illegal drugs, such as marijuana." This new law also leaves out consideration for Canada's legal medical marijuana patients, which is why I don't think it will be in effect for very long.

TIM MEEHAN

PATIENTS AGAINST IGNORANCE AND DISCRIMINATION ON CANNABIS

Vue Weekly welcomes reader response, whether critical or complimentary. Send your opinion by mail (Vue Weekly, 10303 - 108 Street, Edmonton AB T5J 1L7), by fax (780.426.2889) or by email (letters@vueweekly.com). Preference is given to feedback about articles in Vue Weekly. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity.

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Not in anyone's backyard

Farmers near Tofield are part of the growing rural resistance standing up to development in Alberta

SCOTT HARRIS / scott@vuwweekly.com

For much of its century-long history, the Schultz family farmstead has been a centre of community for farmers near Tofield, a place where people gathered to pass time and bond with one another.

"The old farmstead here was always a very social spot in the old days," recalls Brian Schultz, the current operator of the heritage farm located about 80 kilometres southeast of Edmonton, which has been his family's home since 1904. "Ball games and snooker tournaments on the porch, square dances, strawberry socials, box socials, whatever. Our family has always been very community-oriented."

It's a tradition that Schultz has continued to this day, and the last weekend in June he once again opened his farm to locals and what he calls "import people" from the city alike, as he has done since 1998, for the Wild Oats and Notes Music Festival.

While the heart of the festival remains about bringing the community together to enjoy good music and good company, there were indications of the uneasiness lurking beneath the idyllic rural scene.

Snippets of conversation on the grass were just as likely about air quality concerns and baseline water testing as about the Ben Sures set. Chloroplast signs reading "Say No to Sherritt" and "EPCOR ... never mined" shared space on the barns with the BBQ price list. Tucked into the corner of the site, amidst the Canadian-flag adorned folding chairs and colourful blankets, was a small tent, staffed by volunteers from VOCAL, the Voice of Community and Land society, to which the proceeds of the festival were donated. They were there selling memberships and encouraging signatures on a petition to stop a controversial project that would see the land of over 100 other farmers in the area, including the historic Schultz homestead, turned into a giant coal strip mine.

OPPOSITION to the proposed \$2.5 billion Dodds-Roundhill Coal Gasification Plant in Beaver County is just one example of a rising tide of community opposition to rampant oil, gas and energy development in rural Alberta.

Groups have sprouted up in Whitecourt and Peace River to oppose proposals to build Alberta's first nuclear power plant. The Lavesta Area Group's ongoing fight against powerlines in the central corridor was catapulted to front page news when it was revealed that the now-defunct Energy and Utilities Board hired spies to keep tabs on them. Residents of the industrial heartland northeast of Edmonton are fighting the construction of up to nine upgraders to refine tar sands oil.

"In Alberta now, it's almost like being in a war zone. We're getting hit left,

right and centre," said Schultz, himself a member of VOCAL, of the situation outside the province's urban centres. "We are an energy province, there's no doubt about it, but wow, we say yes too easy. We say yes way too easy for the short-term gain. That's Alberta."

Saying yes to the Dodds-Roundhill project would radically change the face of the area around Schultz's farm. If approved, over 300 square kilometres of agricultural land—roughly half the size of Edmonton—would be strip mined over a 40-year period to produce the coal needed to feed Canada's first commercial coal gasification plant. It would likely mean the destruction of an aquifer that lies beneath the land, providing water to farms in the area.

The plant would turn the coal into synthetic gas (syngas)—in amounts equivalent to a billion barrels of oil—to be used for a range of applications, including as fuel, a feedstock for the petrochemical industry or as a replacement for natural gas in refineries and bitumen upgraders.

While a spokesman from Sherritt's corporate affairs department indicated no media relations spokespeople were available to speak with *Vue*, Sherritt's January 2007 public disclosure document on the project outlines what Sherritt sees as the need for the facility: "The development of Alberta's vast oil sands resource has resulted in increased demands for natural gas to produce steam for bitumen recovery and as a source of hydrogen for bitumen upgrading. ... The production of syngas through coal gasification provides alternatives to the use of natural gas to produce steam and hydrogen for bitumen extraction and upgrading."

While Schultz says the community has been told the gas will ultimately feed the plants planned for "upgrader alley" northeast of Edmonton, the number of details which have changed since Sherritt first proposed the project two years ago means he's not convinced that's what will necessarily happen in the end.

"We don't know—projects take so long to go, by the time this one's ready to go it might not have anything to do with Fort Saskatchewan at all. They may produce electricity right there, throw it into the new grids that they're talking about and send it right down to the United States."

Schultz says one of his frustrations is that there is seemingly no room in the process for the citizens who own the resource to decide how to best use it.

"This business decision is being made by private companies," he says. "It has nothing to do with you as a citizen of Edmonton or the provincial government or the city of Edmonton saying, 'Look, we're short of power. We need more power to run our own lightbulbs or run our vacuum cleaners,' or whatever. I actually wouldn't



RURAL RESISTANCE

be against that too much."

He adds that the recent rise in food prices around the world, and a greater focus on local eating through approaches like the 100-mile diet, should be sending the message that while coal is an important resource, so is the food grown in the area around Edmonton.

"We're treating this as if we're the last generation, but this is not the last generation that's going to raise food in this country. It's not," he says emphatically. "The price of food is going up all the time. We can't really afford to be using our land for this type of thing. I think food's fairly important. I think energy is important too, but not at all costs."

BILL SEARS, the chair of VOCAL, is the third generation to live on his thousand-acre family farm, located about a mile from Schultz's land. His hundred-year-old farm will also be consumed by the strip mine if it goes ahead.

While part of the proposal includes a reclamation process which Sherritt says will allow farmers to return to farm their land after the mining is complete, Sears says he's under no illusions.

"Sherritt will say it won't be destroyed, Sherritt says it will be reclaimed. I say it will be destroyed. Our homes would be gone. Our farms would be gone. The trees would be gone. The wetlands would be gone. The natural areas would be gone. It would all be turned into a strip mine," he laments, in a calm but indignant tone.

"There probably can be some argument made that it can be reclaimed for some sort of an agricultural production ... but you can't reclaim what you see here, which is the buildings and the trees," he says, gesturing around. "You know, that tree took a hundred years to grow, so you're not going to reclaim that tree and you're not going to reclaim our yards and our homes and all the infrastructure that goes with that. And you're not going to reclaim our community, because our community will be gone."

Sears sees VOCAL's work to stop that future from becoming a reality as part of the same battle being waged all over the province.

"This is just one part of the thing that's happening in Alberta. This is connected to the tar sands that are connected to the upgraders that are connected to this, that are connected to powerlines, pipelines, all the development that's happening in the province."

He has attended some of the recent hearings on Petro-Canada's proposed upgrader in Sturgeon County and has met with residents of upgrader alley. He says that there he heard concerns that had a familiar ring.

"You know, they're the same sorts of people—just ordinary farmers that want to be farming but are forced into this situation to protect their land," he says. "You know, they talk about all the same things that we talk about: community, land, family values. But they're forced into this."

The knowledge that his family farm could be destroyed to produce a product that could go to fuel upgraders that might displace farmers in another part of the province only makes the pill

more bitter to swallow for Sears. On the other hand, not producing the gas may make the natural gas in the Beaufort Sea valuable enough to finally make the Mackenzie Gas Project feasible, or could tilt things in favour of nuclear power, potentially impacting the people of Whitecourt or Peace River. Because of that, Sears says the haphazard approach of leaving these decisions to industry alone is the wrong way to go.

"The message we try to get out is, 'What do the people of the province think?' Ultimately the people of the province will have to decide what they see for the future of the province," he says. "Do we continue this pace of development and continue the degradation of the landscape and the environment? How long do we do that? So in 40 years we mine this area out. The coal continues south. In 40, 50, 60, 100 years do we want to mine out a good portion of Central Alberta?"

"We've got to start thinking about what comes down the road," he continues. "What are we leaving for our kids? But that's for the people of the province to decide. Because industry will develop—that's their job. Government's job and people's job is to say how we want that development to take place."

TO THAT END, Sears says, VOCAL is talking to everyone who will listen about what's happening in the area and meeting with as many MLAs as they can over the summer to let them know about local opposition to the project. He says they're getting a good reception, especially from newer Conservative MLAs.

When I ask Sears about the reaction

CONTINUES ON PAGE 9

TOP 10 RINGTONES

mobile

- 1) I Kissed A Girl
Katy Perry
- 2) Dangerous feat. Akon
Kardinal Offishall
- 3) Disturbia
Rihanna
- 4) Just Dance feat. Colby O'Donle
Lady GaGa
- 5) When I Grow Up
The Pussycat Dolls
- 6) Shake It
Metro Station
- 7) Viva La Vida
Coldplay
- 8) Forever
Chris Brown
- 9) Like Me
Girlicious
- 10) In The Ayer feat. WILLAm
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FEATURE
ARTIST: **KATY PERRY**

Alternative futures

COMMENT

DYER STRAIGHT

Gwynne Dyer
gwyndyer@vuenewskly.com

You have to hand it to the economics team at Goldman Sachs. It was they who came up with the concept of the "BRICs": the four big economies, in Brazil, Russia, India and China, that were going to catch up with and then overtake the big economies of the developed world. More recently they added the "Next Eleven": middle-sized developing countries like Turkey, Indonesia and Mexico that will also grow fast enough to overtake their old-rich counterparts in the next generation.

Back in 2006, Goldman Sachs predicted that the Chinese economy would surpass that of the United States in the early 2040s, with the Indian economy not far behind. But now the Goldman Sachs team has put out a new set of forecasts.

The Chinese economy, they predict, will overtake the US economy around 2025, not in the 2040s, and will be twice as big by 2050. India's economy by 2050 will still be slightly smaller than that of the United States, but the economies of Brazil, Russia, Indonesia and Mexico will all be bigger than that of the next-largest old-rich country, Britain.

The changes in the pecking order are equally dramatic further down. Turkey's economy in 2050 will be bigger than

Japan's, France's or Germany's, and both Nigeria and the Philippines will have larger economies than Canada and Italy. Korea, Iran and Saudi Arabia will all have bigger economies than Spain.

The predicted changes in per capita income by 2050 are less radical, though still impressive. The United States and the United Kingdom are neck-and-neck at the top, just as they are now, with Canada only slightly behind. Koreans are substantially richer than Japanese—\$80 000 per annum versus \$63 000—and the Chinese still bring up the rear in East Asia with a mere \$50 000 a year.

But hang on a minute. \$50 000 a year is slightly higher than the present per capita income in the US or Britain. In 2050 there will be around 1.5 billion Chinese, and if they have an average per capita income of \$50 000 a year then most of them will be leading a fairly lavish middle-class lifestyle. How is this compatible with what we know about the world's resources of energy, food and other commodities, and about the likely course of climate change?

Goldman Sachs is providing surprise-free projections of current trends. This is a useful exercise, because it sets the larger framework in which the inevitable surprises will take place. But that is all it is, because no 40-year stretch of history is free of surprises.

IN THE PAST 40 YEARS we have seen the rise to great wealth of the oil-export-

ing states of the Arabian peninsula, but a crash in the predicted Iranian growth rate after the 1979 revolution. We have seen the disappointment of the high expectations most people held for newly independent African countries in the 1960s, and the sudden high growth rates of most Asian countries in the 1980s and 1990s. We have seen the collapse of the Soviet empire and the expansion of the European Union into Eastern Europe.

Few economic analysts in 1968 predicted any of this, any more than they foresaw globalization, the internet or the rise of the euro. History does not run on rails, and none of those things was certain to happen (though some had a much higher probability of happening than others). The same applies to the relationship between the present and the future: Goldman Sachs is offering us a point of departure for thinking about the future, not a map of it.

So what are some of the things that could derail this simple picture of a richer future in which the gap between rich and poor has narrowed sharply except for Africa? A mere shortage of oil or other commodities wouldn't change the pecking order much, although it might lower everybody's average income (except in the commodity-exporting countries). Local political upheavals might knock specific countries out of the running, like Iran in the 1980s or Russia in the 1990s, but that wouldn't change the broader picture either.

The one "known unknown" that could do that is large-scale climate change, because it would strike some countries much harder than others, at least in the early phase. And the hardest-hit countries would include most of those that are now climbing rapidly in the rankings.

Countries in the tropics and the subtropics are likely to be hit early and hard by climate change, while most of those in the temperate climate zone will suffer relatively little until a good deal later in the process. Countries like Turkey, Mexico, Indonesia, India and Iran will suffer diminished rainfall and declining food production, and even China, although mostly in the temperate zone, will struggle as the glaciers on the Tibetan plateau that feed most of its major rivers melt away.

Since the countries that suffer least, like the US, Canada, Britain, France, Germany, Russia and Japan, are also the ones that produced most of the greenhouse-gas emissions that have caused the current warming, this will probably result in some very bitter exchanges between North and South. But it also means that the economic pecking order in 2050 may be less different from today's than Goldman Sachs predicts. ▽

Gwynne Dyer is a London-based independent journalist whose articles are published in 45 countries. His column appears each week in *Vue Weekly*.

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Losing touch with Martha and Henry

Summer break a chance to get in touch with the math behind the Alberta Advantage

RICARDO ACUÑA / ualberta.ca/parkland
Politicians everywhere have a natural tendency to get so caught up in the big picture numbers about the economy and employment that they lose sight of what everyday life looks like for the citizens they are supposed to be representing. This is especially true for a jurisdiction like Alberta, where the big picture economic numbers have been looking stellar for some time now.

Over the last 10 to 15 years in Alberta, the government has taken this tendency one step further by publicly dismissing stories about the realities of people's lives as "victim of the week" stories cooked up by the media and opposition parties to discredit the government and the "Alberta Advantage."

The government's response has historically been that there will always be people who are poor and struggling, but that for the majority of average Albertans life has never been better. When was the last time any government members spent some time breaking down what life looks like for average Albertans? Here's an example of what life might look like today for a young couple (let's call them Martha and Henry) trying to build a life in Alberta.

The first consideration is housing. A young couple starting out today is looking at the prospect of paying somewhere between \$300 000 and \$400 000 for a simple starter house, depending on the city they live in. Assuming a 10 per cent down payment, that yields a monthly mortgage cost of between \$1600 and \$2200. A couple that can't afford that is looking at between \$1000 and \$1500 a month in rent for a modest place.

Then there is the cost of utilities. Currently, gas and electricity are in the range of \$100 or more each month. Add to that the cost of a phone line, water and waste disposal charges and internet service, and you're looking at another

\$350 to \$500 per month (and likely much more in the winter months).

In order to get around, a one-car family with an economical compact sedan and an average commute will spend on average between \$200 and \$300 a month on gas (based on one fill a week at current prices). They can add another \$250 to their monthly bill for maintenance and insurance.

A University of Alberta study from a few years ago reported that a basic nutritional food basket for 25-year-olds ran in the neighbourhood of \$400 per month. So, for our fictional young couple starting out, groceries would add close to \$1000 to their monthly living expenses.

Based on the lowest-cost alternative for all of the examples above, we are already talking about our young couple facing monthly costs of about \$3000 every month. For the same couple who have bought a modest house and own two vehicles, those costs jump to about \$4000 a month.

TO PUT THAT into perspective, in order for the couple to have a take-home income of \$4000, both partners would have to be working and earning an annual salary of about \$45 000 each per year (more if they are paying for benefits or making pension contributions).

Keep in mind that the expenses listed above cover only housing, utilities, gas and groceries. What happens if this couple has outstanding student loans? What about a clothing budget? There is also no accounting for entertaining, holidays or medical expenses that may not be covered by benefit plans or savings.

The harsh reality of Alberta's boom is that this situation will only get worse, regardless of what happens with the economy. If the boom continues, inflation will continue to push these expenses through the roof—and Alberta wages have not been keeping pace with infla-

tion for some time now. If the bottom falls out of the boom, then our fictional young couple will be faced with the prospect of losing one or both of their sources of income, and trying to make ends meet on significantly less money.

This is perhaps why, for the first time in over 15 years, there are currently more people leaving Alberta for other provinces than there are coming in.

This is what government MLAs and cabinet ministers are missing—this is what the boom looks like for young families trying to start a life in this province. If this is what is happening in middle Alberta, how much worse is it for single-parent families? Or for those on AISH or other social assistance?

Premier Ralph Klein used to speak about "Martha and Henry" as a way of attempting to show that he was in touch with average Albertans. Sadly, the Martha and Henrys of today are struggling to make ends meet without cutting back on essentials or incurring unsustainable levels of debt or both.

The summer break from the legislature is a perfect time for Premier Stelmach and his cabinet to take a break from the country clubs and energy industry cocktail parties, and spend some time getting reacquainted with Albertans and their daily challenges. Because ultimately, the Alberta Advantage should not be about low corporate taxes, low royalties and easy money for oil companies. The Alberta Advantage should be about the ability of Albertans to establish themselves and their families in this province, and be comfortable in the knowledge that they can build a life here for themselves and their families. ▀

Ricardo Acuña is executive director of the Parkland Institute, a non-partisan public policy research institute housed at the University of Alberta.

RURAL RESISTANCE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

the group has received from their own MLA, the familiarity that is a reality of rural politics—where some of the impacted farmers are on a first-name basis with the premier—shows through.

"We've had good meetings with Mr Stelmach. Of course, he's known as Ed in this area. He listened very politely to us. There's a lot of other pressures on him too. He's the premier of a province that's very dependent on the energy industry and it's very important for them for money. Alberta does well and that's a lot of pressure to [not] turn that tap off."

Still, Sears hopes that Stelmach's own rural background might make him more receptive to the concerns of landowners.

"I hope so. I hope so. Ed talks a lot about community and about roots and heritage and the value of his farm, so those are the same things that hit home when something like this happens," Sears says. "He talks a lot about doing what's right. So, we believe we're doing what's right and hopefully we can convince him that a project like this isn't right."

But Schultz says that finding political solutions is a problem because of the deep roots Stelmach's party enjoys in rural Alberta generally, and in his Fort Saskatchewan-Vegreville riding—where Stelmach received 77.6 per cent of the vote in the last election—specifically. He worries that many people in the area will continue to vote Conservative no matter what happens.

"Here in Conservative country, you know, jeez, I think the Conservative Party, they could probably kidnap your first-born son and I think the person would still vote for 'em. We don't have the ability to vote for someone else. We just don't have any challengers."

But Schultz agrees that a political solution is their best chance to stop the mine, given the history of the rubber-stamp approvals process in the province.

"We know that once it gets to the hearing process you're a done turkey. We have to change the decision before it gets into the hearing, because if you get into the decision-making process through the regulatory process, once it's there you're toast. Once you're there in the province of Alberta you're a done deal; you might as well give up and let 'em do it."

CONSTRUCTION ON THE PROJECT was originally slated to begin in 2009 and production by 2012, but the community

was given a brief reprieve in late May when Sherritt announced it was putting its plans for Dodds-Roundhill on hold due to uncertainty about greenhouse gas regulations in the province.

Mike Gibbs, a media spokesperson for the City of Edmonton-owned EPCOR, which announced in November 2007 that it had signed an agreement to provide power generation, water and wastewater treatment services for the project, says that as a result of the delay EPCOR is no longer involved in Dodds-Roundhill.

"At this point EPCOR has stopped work on the project," says Gibbs, who admits he can't say much more than that. "It doesn't mean that it won't go ahead, but as of right now EPCOR is not involved in the project and we will reassess once Sherritt completes its own assessment of the project."

While Sears is pleased to hear that EPCOR isn't working on the project, at least for the time being, he says the delay announced by Sherritt hasn't made members of the community opposed to the project rest on their laurels.

Members of VOCAL met on July 15 with Sherritt representatives and came away with the message that the company intends to proceed with the project by bringing forward their application in late-2008 or early 2009.

"They are saying that they are still very committed to the project, that they think the project is a very good project and they think that it's badly needed, in their words," he says.

"There was no beating around the bush. There wasn't their talk that they had before about 'How do we make this project work for you?' That was always their tact before, 'How do we make this project so it's acceptable to you?' And we just say, 'Well, just go away.' But they didn't take that tact this time. They took the tact that this project is going to go, and it was more or less, I think, 'Be prepared for the fight.' Which is not anything we didn't expect."


But Sears remains optimistic that the mine can be stopped, just as a similar one proposed for the area in the '70s was.

"I'm very hopeful. I really believe that the tide is starting to turn some in Alberta. Farmland is being looked at as more valuable than it was, with all of a sudden we have a food crisis, two years ago we didn't have that. All of a sudden global warming is becoming a bigger issue. All of a sudden CO₂ is becoming a bigger issue. These things are in the press, people are talking about it. I'm hopeful that we're going to start moving in a direction that will take us away from our reliance on fossil fuels, and hopefully, maybe this can be a first step towards that." ▀

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Temporary workers surge

Alberta home to one in five, Canada tops 200 000

SCOTT HARRIS / scott@vancouverweekly.com

Temporary foreign workers continued to pour into Alberta in 2007, now far outnumbering immigrants who arrive in the province as permanent residents.

According to figures released last week by Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 29 405 temporary foreign workers arrived or returned to the province last year, up 58 per cent from 18 555 in 2006, the first year in which the number of temporary workers surpassed immigrants to Alberta.

As of Dec 1, 2007 there were 37 257 temporary workers living in the province, compared to just 20 857 who arrived through traditional immigration channels to become permanent residents.

Alberta is now home to almost one in five temporary workers in the country, while just 8.8 per cent of immigrants call the province home.

While Alberta's labour crunch has meant the province has seen the most dramatic growth in temporary workers brought in from overseas—their numbers here nearly tripling since 2004 alone—the country as a whole is depending more than ever on workers brought in on temporary work visas, with national statistics showing an increase of 24 per cent in 2007 compared to the previous year, bringing numbers to 201 057 across the country.

Jim Gurnett is the executive director of the Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers (EMCN), a community agency that assists immigrants and refugees who come to the city. He says he's frustrated by the rapid expansion of the temporary foreign worker program in recent years.

"It absolutely bewilders me why Canada is so determined to bring in

NEWS IMMIGRATION

these huge numbers of temporary workers, to put the resources into making it easy for employers to bring temporary workers when first of all we've got hundreds of thousands of people that have paid their money and are waiting in line to come here as immigrants, who already want to make a commitment to build the rest of their lives here," Gurnett says.

"And secondly, we've got a group of well-educated, competent people who have already come as immigrants who the statistics tell us are living a longer time than ever more deeply in poverty in Canada. And so those things are going on and we keep bringing more and more temporary workers to let employers fill jobs at low wages. Everybody loses in the equation."

GURNETT CAUTIONS that the increased focus on the temporary foreign worker program runs the risk of damaging how Canada is perceived abroad.

"The reality is that Canada has a hugely positive reputation because we do take a lot of people and there's only a few countries that do, but what has been really a much more shining reputation, I think there's the beginning of some tarnish on that as the temporary worker stuff gets out," Gurnett warns. "The temporary worker stuff is so blunt, it just says to people, 'We'll let you come here and work but you have zero chance of becoming a Canadian or having you and your family live and work here. We're not interested in a diverse nation where we live together, build lives together, spend lives together in

inclusive ways."

He adds that temporary workers are more vulnerable to abuse, in part because they often lack the language skills required by immigrants and in most provinces don't have access to settlement services.

"The volume of horror stories of employers mistreating temporary workers is just shameful," he says. "There is no abuse of a worker that an employer can commit that you've ever heard of that we haven't heard a story from a foreign worker of."

Gurnett applauds the recent move by the government of Alberta to extend settlement services to temporary workers, saying that EMCN and seven other city agencies are now hiring staff to deal specifically with temporary workers. He thinks the idea should be adopted country-wide.

But Gurnett still argues that the national program which brings low-skilled workers to Canada has too many flaws and should be dismantled.

"The whole temporary worker program should be completely reconsidered. The whole program is a mistake."

He says that if Canada is so short of workers, the government should focus on improving the immigration process.

"We need more staff in Citizenship and Immigration both in Canada and at consulates abroad processing applications faster, giving people definite answers and letting them come here. Because we can use the people. Obviously we need more immigrants or we wouldn't be bringing 40 000 or 50 000 temporary workers more to the country than we used to. So the two go hand in hand. Stop the temporary foreign worker program but improve and speed up an immigrant's chance to get here." ▼

Common sense cure

HEALTH

WELL, WELL, WELL

CONNIE HOWARD

health@vancouverweekly.com

Rates of melanoma (the deadliest of skin cancers) have gone up by 50 per cent since 1980, and the American Cancer Society estimates over 62 000 new cases in the US this year. The solution, we're told, is to apply sunscreen more often—even though we've gone sunscreen-crazy since the '80s, and even though the safety of some key ingredients (oxybenzone) has been called into question over its ability to cause the very free-radical damage sunscreens are supposed to prevent.

It leaves me wondering what happened to common sense, to enjoying the sun long enough to get the desperately-needed benefits of vitamin D but not long enough to damage our skin. I'm thinking the problem isn't so much a little sun as it is the false sense of security the comes with our self-basting in chemicals—a pseudo-safety that makes us reckless about exposure, keeps chemical companies quite happy and does nothing to curb melanoma rates.

We're so vain. And so easily fooled, most easily by those who wear the mantle of convention. Which leads me again to the pro-Bill C-51 campaigns now being organized by skeptics groups who believe we do in fact need tighter regulation of natural health products—and who, ironically, also believe that the bill won't unduly restrict natural health products, as they'll continue to be regulated by the Natural Health Products Directorate, a directorate that has already resulted in thousands of perfectly safe products disappearing from the market.

The truth is that there is an industry informing those writing and supporting bills like C-51 (and behind those delivering sun-safety messages), an industry that does not have our safety as a top priority. Shane Ellison—who, as a former Eli Lilly employee, should know—says, "As a scientist, I witnessed first-hand the

priorities of international pharmaceutical companies ... [they] ranked wealth first and health a distant second."


I tried to find out just how big the drug lobby is in Canada, but Duff Conacher of Democracy Watch told me that neither our provincial governments nor our federal government require disclosure of dollar figures. US numbers probably give us a pretty good idea of the magnitude of its influence though—they spent \$189 million on lobbying Washington last year, according to the Center for Public Integrity.

WE ALL KNOW that industry will go to great lengths to protect its interests, and the drug industry is no different than any other—it wants to land on its feet, and likely will, as it has in Australia, whose natural health products industry has been pummeled and stripped and is now, since the passing of a bill similar to C-51, a mere ghost of its former self.

Having followed medical politics for many years, Helke Ferrie, in an open letter to Stephen Harper, argues a number of reasons C-51 should be scrapped, one of them being that the existing *Food and Drugs Act* actually already has a clear concept of safety in its regulations (the ones that permitted Dr Shiv Chopra and his colleagues to bring forward the science identifying bovine growth hormone as dangerous before they were fired for insubordination.)

I want to trust agencies whose apparent purpose it is to look out for our safety, but in light of facts like these, and Stephen Harper being awarded the Code of Silence Award by the Canadian Association of Journalists last year for his silencing of scientists and rejection of freedom-of-information inquiries, trust can be a little hard to come by.

We don't need aggressive fine-tooth-comb protection from products that pose a risk lower than that posed by our food chain any more than we need more chemicals on our skin. We just need some shade, a little common sense and a lot of skepticism of the wealthiest and most powerful voices among us. ▼



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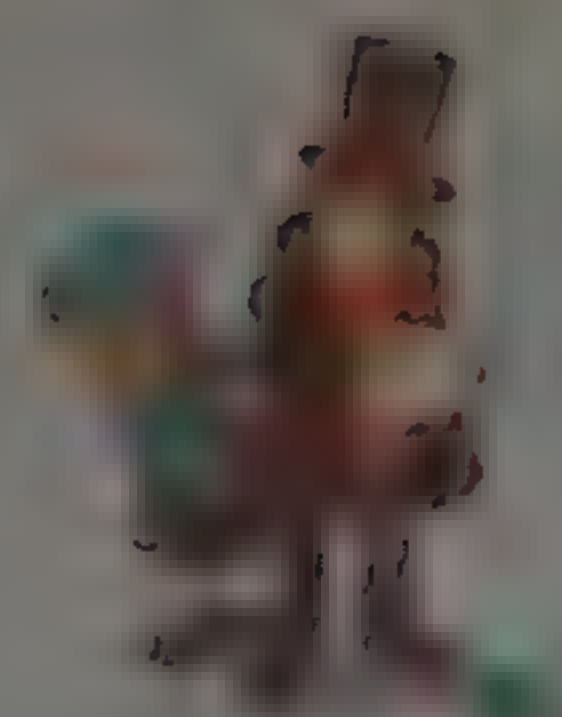
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I've come a bit late to *Layton*, the DS puzzle sensation. In general, I'm not really much of a brain-teaser kind of guy; I don't usually have the patience and mental discipline (not to mention the "that's easy" tricks of the puzzle-solver's trade) to take pleasure in hours of matchstick-moving, pitcher-pouring, figuring out the ages of siblings or picking the liar (or the lone truth-teller) out of a lineup of con men. But I'd heard good things about the game through the nerdosphere, and in the week running up to my wedding I knew that if I was to get any gaming in at all it would have to be something I could snap open and shut at any instant, so ... off to the Village I went.

A puzzle anthology, a digital version of those fat newsprinted *1001 Mega Brain Teasers* books with which lake cabins and bathrooms are stocked against rainy days and lengthy craps, *Layton* sets its hundreds of little challenges within a matrix



resembling a mystery-adventure game. You guide the Professor and his plucky precocious assistant through the Euro-charming locales of the town, questioning with the townsfolk, moving step by step through a mystery ... and at every step a new puzzle to solve.

Now, puzzle-solving is at the heart of adventure gaming. But here the puzzles aren't environmental or story-driven—no figuring out how to enter a locked room, booby-trap a doorway or deke past a careless guard. The puzzles are just there, presented as obstacles, connected tenuously to the story's themes and events if they're connected at all, a series of old-fashioned headscratchers that just happened to be framed by a mystery/adventure conceit. An

innkeeper might ask you about how a farmer might get his hens and foxes across the river; a shift character in an alley could demand you solve a cheery sliding-tile puzzle before he'll clue you in on murder; the Lady of the Manor may require help with some fluid-filled beakers before she'll spill family secrets.

THIS DOESN'T DO MUCH for the ol' suspension of disbelief: "Oh, you want me to solve this dumb puzzle for you before you'll let me into your shop? Well, I am already kind of busy with the tricky puzzle of 'What the fuck is up with this crazy Franco-Italianate hamlet and its scary evil tower?' but OK; the third brother is obviously lying, duh. Can I search your place for hidden coins now?"

Ah, hidden coins. Just one part of *Layton's* wonderful system of gentle forgiveness. Scattered around the Curious Village are Hint Coins, just waiting to be discovered with the tap of a stylus. These tokens can be exchanged for puzzle-solving advice in three levels, from gentle guidance to outright cribbing ... and

they're plentiful, tucked inside every second candlestick, rain-barrel, gaslight and knickknack on screen. Taking a little time to poke around, even the dimmest of puzzle-solvers will end up with a fat bagful of get-out-of-puzzle-free coins. Puzzle purists might think this too babycakes, but in my experience the Hint Coin system made all the difference between a frustrated powering-off and playing on.

Ancillary benefit: searching the scenes for Hint Coins allows (forces?) players to get a little more intimate with the details of the wonderful background art that might otherwise go unnoticed or taken for granted in the puzzle-puzzle-puzzle flow of the game. The excellent art direction, actually, is one of the things that make *Professor Layton*, despite its mechanical reality as a collection of warmed-over brainteaser Frankensteins onto a completely linear adventure game, so captivating. It's the kind of thing I ought to dislike—have historically disliked—but good aesthetics, pleasant dialogue and a just-twisty-enough mystery plot kept me hooked far longer than any quiz book ever has. ♥

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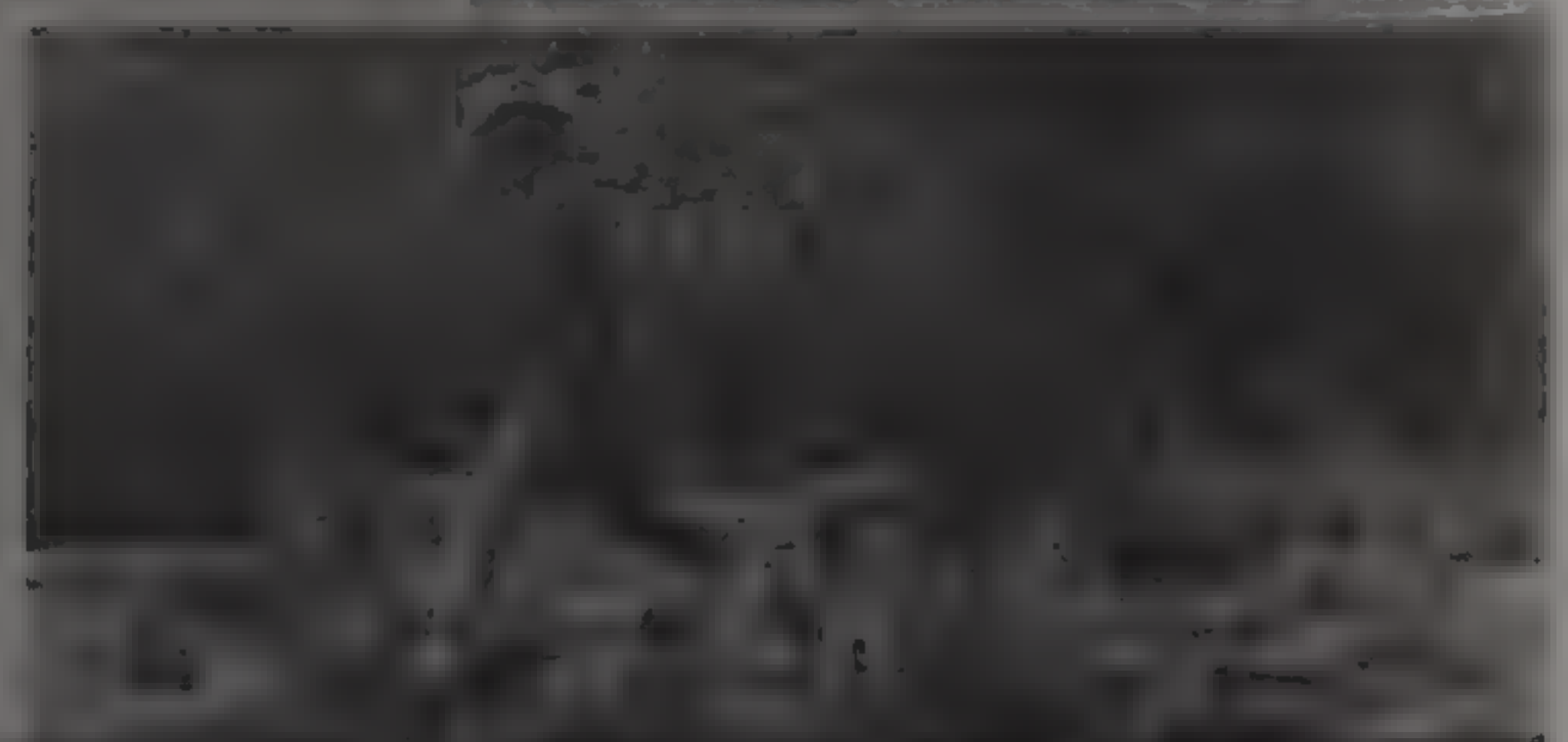
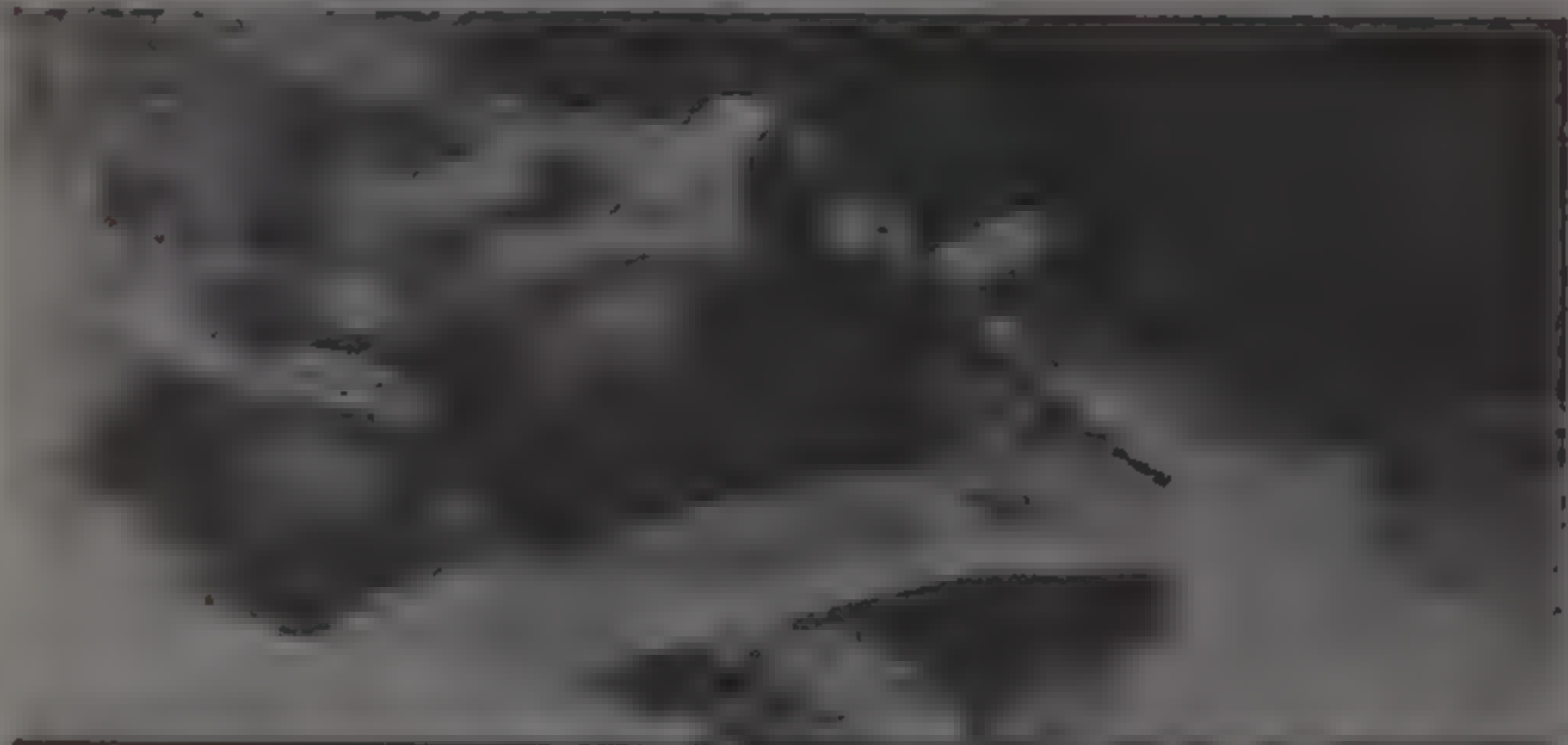
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Feelin' Blue Plate

JAN HOSTYM / jan@vueweekly.com

I've been on a breakfast tear lately. Not the kind where you grab a quick bite of whatever is handy as you head out the door; the kind where you actually go out, sit down in a real chair and choose between a number of tempting healthy (and not-so-healthy) options that you can then enjoy in a luxurious, leisurely manner. Coffee, carbs and eggs, someone else cooking and cleaning up after you, all with no time pressures—what more could you want?

So, with a long, leisurely Sunday stretching out in front of me, I decided to seize the opportunity to treat my family to breakfast at the **Blue Plate Diner**. Although I've been to the quirky diner numerous times, it has always been past 7 pm, a bit too late for breakfast.

It was just after 9 am on a blustery Sunday morning when we blew in the door. One lone couple was sipping coffee by the window at the front of the big room. A hostess casually made her way from the back of the room to greet us, and we were seated at a table for four next to an exposed brick wall. Although the room is big and open with high ceilings and lots of tables, each with a personality of its own, small partitions with little windows and teal blue window frames made us feel like we had our own space.

The bright spring morning outside contrasted dramatically with the warm, muted effect of the interior: soft lighting came from the dropped metal lights above us and the glowing



orange lights accenting the earthy mustard and copper walls. Wood tables and chairs dominated the room, though some of the tables seemed to have been transported straight from my grandma's functional, no-frills, 1950s-style kitchen, complete with the shiny, slippery vinyl chairs. The room oozed with character.

A wall across from us, filled with bright paintings of a huge assortment of coffee cups, reminded me that I had not yet satisfied my daily caffeine craving, so we quickly consulted our

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bright yellow menus. Once our waitress was making her way back to the kitchen with our order for a latté (\$3.50), a coffee (\$2.50) and two hot chocolates (\$3.50 each), we turned our attention to breakfast.

THE MENU FITS NICELY on one page and covers everything from pork chops to eggs benedict to granola to a tofu scramble. There are vegan and vegetarian options (including veggie sausage) and even a small kids' section. The absence of any sort of cinnamon-y bun creations didn't sit well with either of my kids, but one settled on the Fruit and Grilled Cornbread (\$8.50) and the other on the Kids' Pancake Breakfast (\$6.50), minus the egg. My husband felt like the standard Big Breakfast of eggs, bacon, toast and potatoes (\$9.50) and I ordered the

Breakfast Burrito (\$9.50), minus the potatoes. Our waitress kindly asked if I would like fruit instead and I reluctantly agreed.

Our drinks came, and after the waitress had quickly scooted away I noticed that my one daughter's hot chocolate was much smaller than the other's (I later found out that our waitress had taken it upon herself to serve us one regular hot chocolate and one kids' hot chocolate, something we would have

CONTINUED ON PAGE 17

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Summer just wouldn't be the same without it. Actually, winter wouldn't be the same without it either, but it does seem slightly better when it's dripping on flip-flops instead of freezing onto warm and fuzzy mittens. I'm talking about that delectable and creamy frozen creation that you plop in bowls, stuff in cones, douse in sauce and top with anything and everything. Call it whatever you want—ice cream, gelato, sorbet, sorbetto, sherbet—but whatever name it goes by, it's delicious.

With ice cream shops and gelato cafés popping up all over town, it's getting easier to satisfy any sudden and intense cravings that may overtake you. And, if you are going to indulge in ice cream or gelato, you might as well indulge in the really good stuff. After all, what could be better than a scoop of really good, locally made, all-natural, lovingly prepared, frozen goodness?

Think back to the early '80s and you'll realize just how lucky we are. Back then, there was a serious lack of

COOL | LOCALLY MADE ICE CREAM

ice cream parlours in this city, let alone good ice cream. Thankfully, Salvatore Ursino and his brother-in-law were missing the amazing gelato/ice cream that they grew up on back in Italy, so they decided to take matters into their own hands—they hopped a plane back to Italy and immersed themselves in learning the art of making good ice cream/gelato. They came back to Canada, opened up a little store in the Aldergrove neighbourhood, and Pinocchio Ice Cream was born.

Edmonton must have been ice cream starved; in August of 1982 alone, they sold over 20 000 cones of ice cream and have never looked back. You can't pop into Pinocchio for a cone anymore, but you can buy it by the litre at some of the specialty grocery stores around town, or indulge in it at one of the over 140 restaurants they now supply to.

You can wander into Da Capo


Caffé, Tra Amici, Bueno Gelato!, Leva and fantasia Gelateria (and probably a few more), and have premium, locally made gelato (or sorbetto) dribbling down your chin in no time, though. Or you can roam around any one of our major grocery stores, pick up a bucket of ice cream, made god-knows-when, in god-knows-where, with god-knows-what, and shovel that down.

BEFORE I GET INTO the nitty gritty of ice cream/gelato vs really good ice cream/gelato, you need (like I did) a quick lesson in the difference between all the names. In Italian, gelato essentially means frozen, so when you go to Italy, you eat gelato, not ice cream. Here in Canada, we tend to be a bit more uptight and rule-obsessed, so the definitions are a bit more precise. Basically, it all comes down to the amount of butterfat. Tom Ursino, over at Pinocchio, gave me the lowdown: sorbet has 0 per cent butterfat, sherbet three to four (but a very high sugar content), gelato has six to seven per cent, light ice-cream rings in at eight to 9.9 and, finally, ice cream is anything that has 10 per cent or more butterfat. And even though Pinocchio sells ice cream and sorbetto, it is made much like traditional Italian gelato.

But how can something that tastes so divinely rich and creamy have such a low butterfat content? James Fiorillo over at fantasia, Antonio Bilotta at Da Capo and Tom from Pinocchio, gelatiere's extraordinaire, patiently took me through gelato 101.

These masters of creation explained that there are three components to good gelato. First, it's made with all natural ingredients. Second, it's lower in butterfat content, and third, it's got a low overrun, overrun being the amount of air that is incorporated into the ice cream/gelato as it's being churned. The less air, the denser the product, and the silkier the texture. Good gelato has an overrun of 25 - 30 per cent. That's why good gelato/ice cream has that incredibly rich, incredibly velvety texture when it's melting luxuriously in your mouth. Mass-produced, factory

CONTINUES ON PAGE 17



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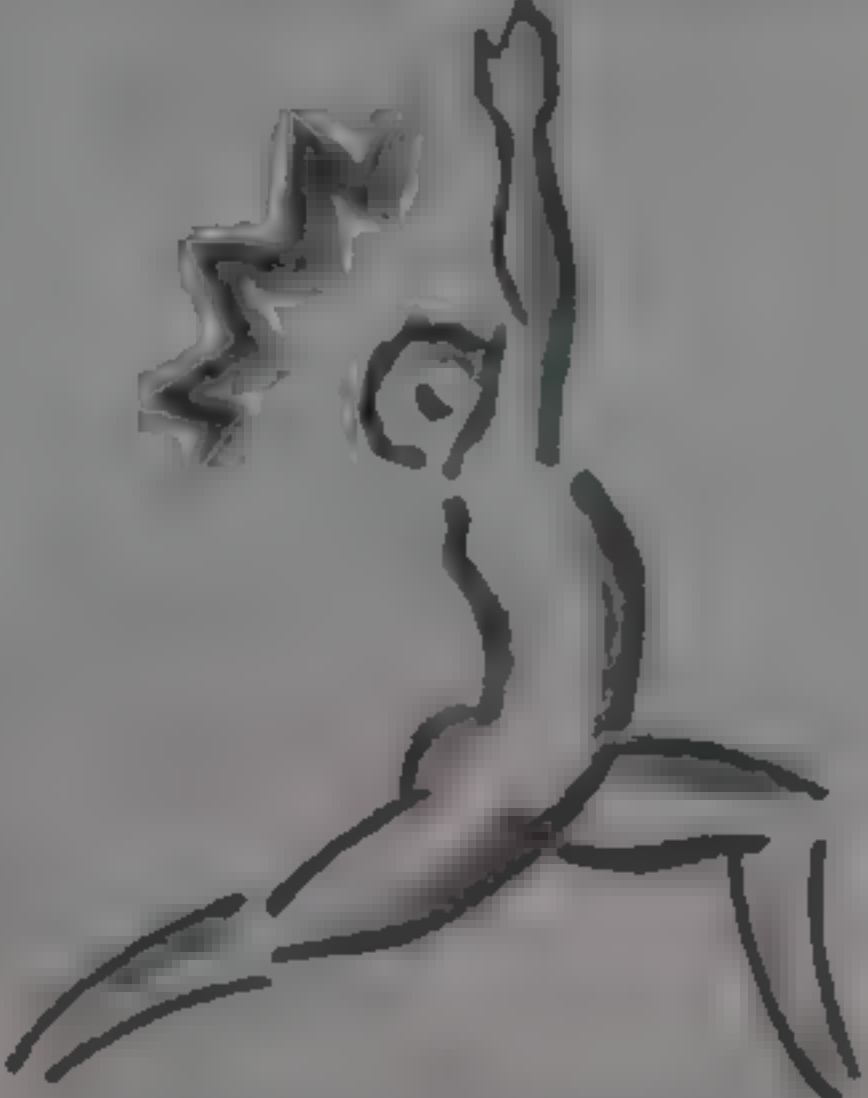
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LIQUOR?

I HARDLY KNOW 'ER
HARVEY KARPIS
HARDLY@VIEWWEEKLY.COM

It's gorgeous, it comes in a beautiful bottle, it's refreshing and it makes fantastic cocktails. So why isn't Campari more popular? When I went to buy a bottle for this article, the clerk of the first liquor store I tried had never heard of it. At the next store, there was a shelf full of Campari bottles, their ruby-red contents and beautiful labels partly obscured by a thick layer of dust, as if they'd been languishing there for years.

Maybe part of this is colour-trickery. The carmine colouring of Campari, whether mixed with orange or grapefruit juice, with tonic or soda water, makes an exceptionally pretty drink, something that looks like it should be served to a group of girlfriends out on the town. But the unsuspecting sipper might be surprised by its decidedly unsweet punch of bitter flavour. It takes some getting used to: Italians say that you have to try Campari three times to learn to enjoy it. But in the end, believe me, you will.

It's the namesake of Gaspare Campari, who created and served it as an aperitif (a pre-dinner drink designed to wake up the tastebuds) at his bar in Milan in the 1860s. It gained a following in the US during prohibition, when Americans visiting Italy enjoyed the drink and began bringing it home legally, since it was classified as medicinal in the States. The recipe remains a secret even today, though the ingredients are known to include quinine (the flavouring you know from tonic water), rhubarb, orange peel, ginseng and bitter herbs. Think about this list and you get a bit of a foretaste—that's a lot of bitter.

BUT ALL OF THOSE bitter flavours add up to an incredibly sophisticated alcohol that is the perfect accompaniment to a hot summer patio. When you take a sip of Campari, the initial taste is mild citrusy sweetness quickly chased off by drying bitterness. The taste has a way of lifting

BICICLETTA

NEGRONI

Since Campari

off your tongue, leaving refreshment behind. In Italy, it is often served in frozen glasses over ice, with a splash of soda water. Others drink it straight on the rocks, a serving you might need to work up to.

If you're not ready to drink Campari on its own, try it with orange or grapefruit juice, which complement its citrus notes. It makes a great addition to cocktails, where it adds a note of dry sophistication. Try the Negroni or Bicycletta, or try it the way Hemingway enjoyed it when he visit-

ed Campari's bar back in the day—as an Americano (1 1/2 ounces of Campari, 1 1/2 ounces of sweet vermouth over ice, then top with a splash of club soda). Or, any of these with bowls of olives and salty roasted almonds or just a bag of potato chips and you've got a perfect afternoon.

However you try Campari, you will enjoy it. If you don't like it the first time try again. And then try again.

Just take it slow. It's summer, after all what else have you got planned? ♥

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ICE CREAM

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 15

gelato is usually more like 100 - 200 per cent, and your mouth definitely feels the difference. And all natural ingredients have got to be a good thing. Let's face it—would you rather eat a scoop of carefully crafted, frozen milk-cream-sugar-egg yolks-natural flavours-and-other-natural-stuff, or are you happy indulging in artificial colours and flavours, topped off with some polysorbate 80 and mono and diglycerides?

THE FRIENDLY GELATIERES also stressed that the quality of your final product is only as good as the quality of the ingredients that you put into it. That means extensive searching, hunting down and importing only the top ingredients from the top suppliers. The creations over at Da Capo also vary depending on what fruit is in season, and they try to use locally grown ingredients whenever they can.

Finally, when you eat locally made gelato or ice cream, it's definitely fresher. Most of Edmonton's little cafes and shops make it daily during the summer—and as much as the

positive side of me would like to believe that the boxed varieties at the store down the street were just churned yesterday, let alone last month, I simply can't.

If that still doesn't convince you to seek out the locally made stuff, try this little science experiment. Pop into your favorite gelato place and get some to go (or buy a litre of Pinocchio or fantasia at one of our premium grocery stores), and then grab a carton of some mass-produced stuff at the supermarket. First just lift them. The mass-produced gelato/ice cream is going to weigh a lot less—that's the overrun. The locally made stuff contains way less air. Which would you rather indulge in: air or ice cream/gelato?

Next, leave them on the counter and let them melt. There will be more of the locally made gelato in the container. Overrun again. But notice the foamy, gooey gunk on top of the mass-produced bucket. That's stabilizers. Not so appealing.

So why buy locally made gelato/ice cream? Well, aside from the obvious fact that you're supporting our local economy and the people who pour their heart and soul into making it for us, it's simply better. Much better. Sinfully, wickedly better. After all, making it is an art.

So go try some. Now. ▼

BLUE PLATE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 15

ordered had we wanted it that way! My daughter was a bit annoyed but didn't want to wait to have it fixed so promptly attacked the billowy whipped cream on the top.

I eagerly grabbed my latté but was disappointed with the lukewarm temperature. The larger hot chocolate also suffered from a lack of heat and we sent them back. The replacements were a much better temperature but unfortunately both drinks had an unpleasant bitter edge to them.

The girls had a chance to zip around the almost empty room and check out many of the eclectic, kitschy lamps adorning each table before breakfast arrived. Once it did, there was a flurry of syrup pouring, pancake cutting and jam spreading to be done before anyone had a chance to sneak a bite. First up was the huge kids' pancake, so big it almost covered the whole plate. Not the thin

"pancake breakfast" variety, it was thick and fluffy and declared utterly delicious. The accompanying bacon was cooked perfectly; not too crisp but not soft and rubbery either.

My burrito was a delectable combination of scrambled eggs, melted cheese, tangy salsa and the most incredible creamy guacamole ever, all stuffed in a warm, soft tortilla. A crisp exterior would have provided a nice contrast to the soft, creamy inside, but it was still tasty and comforting, just like a Sunday breakfast should be. The side dish of fruit was your typical mixture of cantaloupe, honeydew, grapes, orange, and pineapple. Not terribly different or exciting, but it was fresh.

UNFORTUNATELY, the other two meals didn't fare quite as well. The Big Breakfast was okay, but the poached eggs were hard and the fried potatoes weren't very hot. The bacon and toast were good, though, and my husband, who likes eggs any which way, ate them without complaint.

My daughter fared the worst with

her Fruit and Grilled Cornbread. The fruit part of it was fine—a somewhat larger version of the small bowl that came with my burrito—but the "incredible maple-glazed cornbread" didn't live up to its billing. The flavour was fine, but it was so dry that even copious amounts of butter and jam were unable to salvage it. I know: recipes can vary from moist and dense to dry and crumbly, but this was dry even for dry cornbread.

Our bill came and I was surprised to find that I had been charged for the fruit the waitress suggested I substitute for the potatoes. Not a big deal, but it should have been mentioned up front, especially since it was her idea.

Breakfast at the Blue Plate Diner proved to be a mixed bag, but one worth getting up for. The amazing pancakes and guacamole are definitely worth a repeat visit, as is the comfortable, eclectic décor. A few minor glitches just prove that everyone, even quirky diners, can have good and bad days, but that just gives them a bit more personality. ▼

FOOD NEWS!

DISH WEEKLY

THE WORLD IN A PARK

Dozens of diverse dishes will be available in one convenient spot this weekend, as Edmonton's Heritage Days celebration also features a variety of cultural activities. Everyone is excited about the food, with many people preparing the finest of local dishes. It's a heavenly treat for everyone with a fond palate.

Head down to Hawrelak Park anytime from Aug 2 to Aug 4 to check it out.

TO YOUR HEALTH

deVine Wines will offer a selection of wines from local winemakers en Sante this Sat, Aug 2 from 11 am - 3 pm. Picking their fruit from Alberta's first certified-organic orchard, en Sante offers saskatoon, rhubarb, raspberry and alfalfa wines, to name but a few. It's the perfect opportunity to have a drink while keeping it local and organic.

Dish Weekly spills the beans on culinary events in Edmonton. Do you have something going on that our city's gourmands should know about? Just send an e-mail to dish@vuwweekly.com

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Moving bodies

Nudes anything but still at Harcourt



MARY CHRISTA O'KEEFE / marychrista@vueweekly.com

The human body is one of the most enduring subjects in art, testament to our deep biological urge for social connection manifesting in a fascination with our own kind, however dimly echoed around us. Our ancestors saw the body everywhere: in undulating hills and thrusting mountains, in sinuous stretches of river and depths of caverns, in enigmatic patterns of the heavens. We made gods in our own image, some hybridized from other aspects of nature, inserting ourselves in a continuum of blood, hair, bone, earth and

an elusive quality of aliveness.

Millennia on, the body still has primacy in representation across visual mediums and in pop culture. It's a container for celebrity, the subject of plastic, tribal and cybernetic modification, a battleground for technology, and still the ultimate template for robots—there are better solutions for specific tasks, yet we keep building variations on the humanoid theme.

Despite the influence of the present and anticipation of the future, the original biological impulse thunders on: we need few lines to convey human physicality, to recognize

VIZ ARTS

UNTIL SAT. AUG 30
LUCIOLE
WORKS BY JACQUES CLÉMENT

DRAWING INTO SCULPTURE

WORKS BY RICHARD TOSZAK
HARCOURT HOUSE-MATE EDMUND HAAKONSON

planes, curves, and angles intended to assemble in our mind's eye as "body."

As summer's heat surrounds us with the most skin we'll see all year, exhibition spaces converged on the subject. *BODY WORLDS* at the Telus World of Science gives us a literal look, but the body also features in other recent shows: Karen Dugas' acrobatic nude in *The Trapeze* at SNAP, Corissa O'Donnell's illustrated pin-up girls in *FANCY* at Latitude 53, graphite portraiture in *Profiles' Water & Carbon*, intense identity images at AGA's *Face the Nation*, and superhuman sculptures of Harcourt House-mate Edmund Haakonson at The Works.

HARCOURT'S NEW SHOWS focus explicitly on the body: Richard Toszak's *Drawing Into Sculpture*

and Jacques Clément's *Luciole* are both dedicated to human form, capturing its mechanics, presence, and energy while working with the nude.

Toszak's show occupies Harcourt's smaller gallery, and it's tight navigating through his plinth-bourne clay pieces, but the intimacy suits the premise. *Drawing Into Sculpture* is more than a title—it's Toszak's thesis, laid as bare as his models. The Albertan artist lets viewers see initial steps of a process that'll end, for the figures, in bronze. The walls hold his first phase, nudes of utter simplicity conjured from inky black strokes with restraint and feeling.

The artist extends the gestures of these sources into the three-dimensional world, materializing in fleshy ashen clay. The scale's odd, though not uncomfortable: perfectly formed humans, shrunk a few sizes, as if they were brought to life with some magic, with bones of the earth, pinned into gesture by an armature, waiting for the eternal freedom of translation into metal.

After the closeness of Toszak's room, the spacious expanse of the main gallery startles. Clément's work is more installation than sculpture—the Montreal-based artist works on sheets of folded paper ("like a map," his statement asserts, accurately: imagine that scale, each panel about the size of a shoebox bottom), the earthy colour of wood pulp, filling most resulting panels with loose, often colourful nudes and geometric shapes. He accords his mixed media works off the wall, so panels zigzag vertically into the third dimension (the exception is one piece left folded in five dense sections, bound by

bands of chocolate brown paper, jutting from the wall like wrong-way shelves holding its secrets with only tantalizing glimpses of the figure within).

The effect of the unfolded pieces is like stilled animation, eerily beautiful the real represented in a consciously unreal way across scales that range from a couple feet long to a mural blanketing the largest wall, with a hundred or so smaller images.

Clément situates 10 pieces in the room, each coherent within itself and the show, but distinct from its brethren—a new adventure in working the nude through mark-making every time.

His evocations of body are generous and varied—scrawls of fitful, turbulent, gestural lines; thick for pushes of richly hued paint; washes of colour floating slightly off the form—and each contribute a different mood to the subject. The figures' poses fossilize Clément's process in various pieces: in some, the bodies move, fluidly as if dancing, while others are disjointed, like a still from a show. The figure wanders off the frames: sometimes a shadow remains, sometimes an angular border, sometimes nothingness.

In the largest piece, at the bottom just off the centre is a strange artist signature: a semicircle in vivid red, the partial rim of a cup, with a squiggly drip pulled away by gravity.

Both shows render a model into something more essentialized, reimagining that person through process, bringing her back to life through art. Our recognition of the journey, somehow, is part of what makes us human. ♥

Weirdo Magnate

Lynda Barry's *What It Is* reconnects the creative life to the head and heart

MARY CHRISTA O'KEEFE / marychrista@vueweekly.com

There's something crazy about accelerating, pluralistic 21st-century culture, maddening and wonderful. Genres in art, literature and music ramble over each other like panicked or frolicking animals, disregarding taxonomic fences we've put up to divide them, confounding critics, retailers and the Dewey Decimal System. A simultaneous phenomenon is "medium blur": stand-up comedy that's performance art, "reality" that's scripted, books as art pieces, video games that are cinematic, films that mimics video game

structure (even without a franchise) and world-building that crisscrosses mediums to become its own entity, existing partially in a shared imagination.

While marketers have thoroughly jumped this train and taken it to mainstream station, packaging "concept" products together, many ancestral DIY misfits are still out there, people whose original cultural offerings were plaintive flares fired in the dark asking, "Am I the only weirdo?" before it was endearing.

These were the creators of oddball things, little or ambitious, fitting no

BOOKS

WHAT IT IS
BY LYNDA BARRY
DRAWMAN AND QUARTET
210 PP, \$24.95

template: comics about losers instead of superheroes; games played with collaboratively narrated scenarios instead of gameboards; surreal home-made films with no hope of venue. People like the Flaming Lips, theatrical when it was fashionable to pretend you didn't give a roaring shit about audiences, libertarian magic-using-but-not-believing renegades Penn & Teller and Lynda Barry, who fretted she couldn't really draw or write yet loved both, and nurtured a more nebulous drive for storytelling and expression that led her to become part of the second generation of alternative comic artists.

BARRY'S CONTEMPORANEOUS TO MONTY GROENING, who she met at college in

Olympia, Washington, where her first *Ernie Pook's Comeek*—featuring adolescent Marlys, a pigtailed redhead with glasses and overbite—ran in the college paper, alongside Groening's *Life In Hell* (she went to high school with another purveyor of illustrative freak, Charles Burns).

Her *Comeek* has run over 30 years in various venues (strips and other goodies are available at marlysmagazine.com), kicking off Barry's career writing, illustrating and crafting audio pieces (some gathered in recordings, most on NPR) that have the same sweetly surreal, goofy timbre that threads through her work, whether she's documenting a poodle with a Mohawk, drawing meditating monkeys or recalling her heartbreakingly crappy childhood where of her few allies, her imagination served her best (along with books, television and the radio).

Her latest book, *What It Is*, is the most genre/medium-compressing

piece she's done yet. Somewhere between a memoir, kind teacher's patient encouragement, those boxes of inexplicable treasures that children keep under their beds and a series of koans, *What It Is* integrates the wisdom of her workshop "Writing the Unthinkable" (myspace.com/writingtheunthinkable) with illustrated stories and more art—collage, drawings, paintings and evocative wordage—than most see in a year. It's also an honest and thorough discussion about the creative impulse, designed to reconnect the participant ("reader" is inadequate) to the kingdom of imagination that ruled their childhoods and bring it into an adult practice of expression, no matter what medium, to create with substance and integrity.

Most importantly, *What It Is* still sends up the flare, but as response as well as question: you are never the only weirdo of your kind. ♥

Kafka on the track

BOOKS HOPSCOTCH

JOSEF BRAUN
hopsotch@vancouverweekly.com

In Paul Cronin's enormously entertaining book of interviews *Herzog on Herzog*, the legendary Bavarian filmmaker confesses that he's long considered opening a film school, one where the entrance exam would consist of nothing more than travelling alone on foot—the suggested distance is 5000 kilometres—and writing about the journey. Upon examining the notebooks, Herzog, a proud autodidact, would then be able to discern who'd walked the full distance and who hadn't, and thus who would make the cut. "While walking," Herzog explains, "you would learn much more about filmmaking than if you were in a classroom."

The irreverence of this statement is hardly lost on me, yet the truth is it strikes me as an utterly solid idea. Anyone who truly engages in a creative act, however reliant on the imagination, however ostensibly sedentary, knows perfectly well that to create is physically demanding. I'd even propose that the more restraining the activity, the more strenuous the physical discipline needed to counterbalance it. By this logic, if making films requires walking, something as contained as writing requires an activity more aerobically demanding. But then, I'm totally biased. I'm one of those people: a running writer.

To say the least, I've never been athletic, but, to the surprise of many of my friends, running seems to suit me. It's basically free, keeps me outdoors (where I'm often happiest), allows me to wander and daydream, to meditate or, just as importantly, wipe the slate blank and think of nothing. It's also a form of preparation, of focusing, of testing one's endurance, something you need a lot of when you're sitting alone in a room with this arguably rather strange task ahead of you. (With any luck it'll also, you know, keep me from getting fat.)

Writing and running both being essentially solitary acts, I only realized how relatively common running writers were when I found them by accident, like my dear friend Saskatoon novelist Shelley Leedahl, who, to my astonishment, I caught diligently doing her daily morning run in the staggering, sticky heat of Mérida, Mexico, where we met during an artist residency. I then discovered some writers who actually wrote about running, like Joyce Carol Oates in her memorable 1999 essay for the *New York Times*. And now, most satisfying of all, I've been able to read Haruki Murakami's new memoir

What I Talk About When I Talk About Running (Bond Street Books, \$27.95), its title a re-working of Raymond Carver's most well-known story collection, which Murakami translated into Japanese.

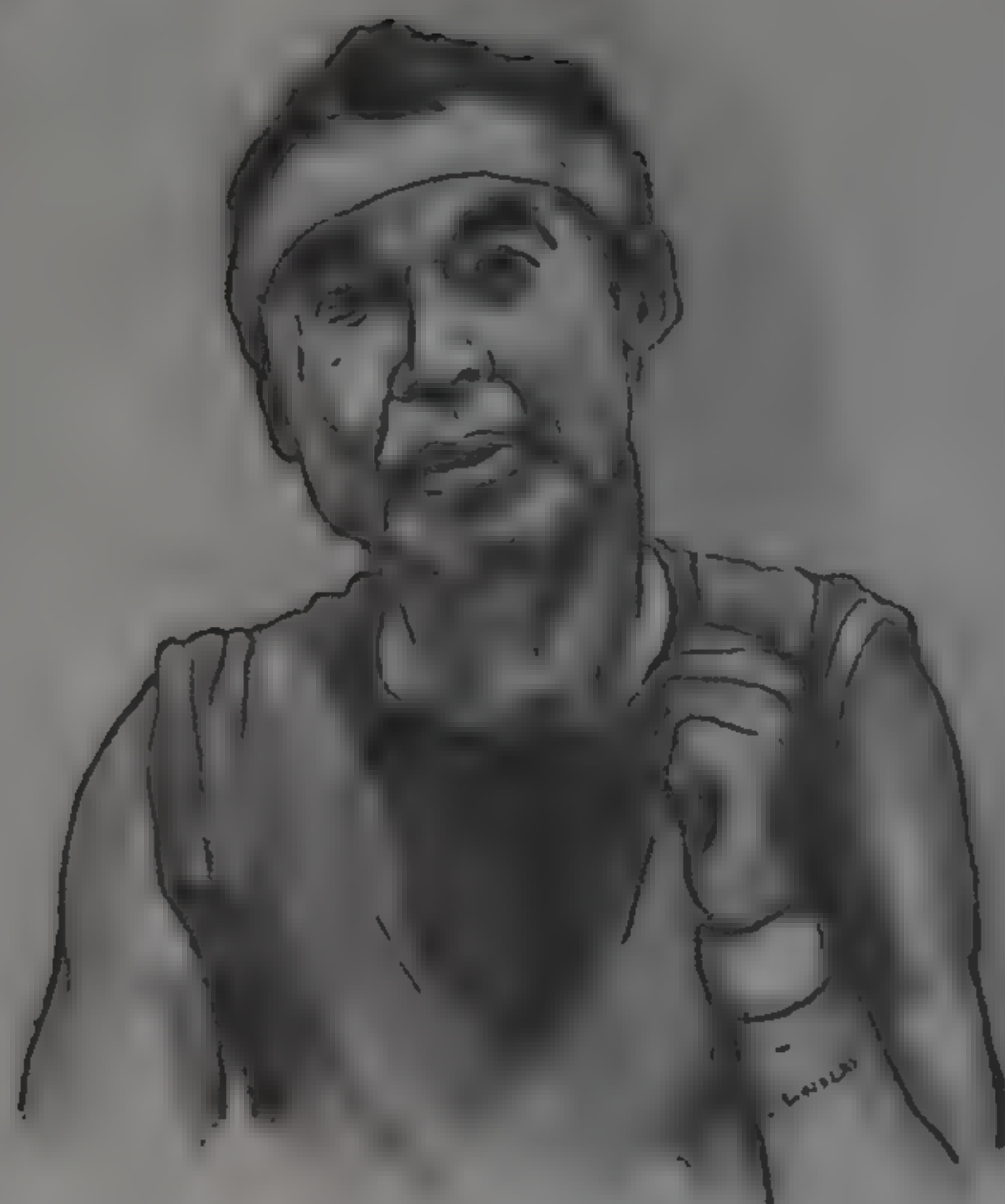
EVEN IF YOU didn't know Murakami was a runner, if you've read a few of his novels you probably wouldn't be too surprised. In *Kafka on the Shore*, to draw out an obvious example, Murakami's titular protagonist experiences a transcendental state after hiking at an increasingly rigorous pace through wilderness while listening to John Coltrane's rendition of "My Favorite Things" (Murakami's as obsessed with jazz as he is with running). This sort of transcendence is described in Murakami's trademark everyman's prose, when he recalls running the final stretch of an ultramarathon. It was, he writes, "like my body had passed through a stone wall ... I don't know about the logic or the process or the method involved—I was simply convinced of the reality that I'd passed through."

Most of the time, however, the experience of running chronicled in *What I Talk About* is of a perfectly banal sort—and I mean that in a good way. Murakami not being a competitive sort, or by his own confession even a sociable sort, treasures running as a way to meet his own private goals: 36 miles a week, six miles a day, six days a week is the routine he describes from his desk, which at various points is located in either Massachusetts, Hawaii or Hokkaido. He runs at least one marathon a year and, perhaps more difficult to comprehend since he doesn't seem to like cycling, has also tried to squeeze in an annual triathlon to boot. He talks about fun incidentals, like what music he

listens to (mostly rock, from Beach Boys to Beck), and shares anecdotes about running in exotic places and under diverse, sometimes humorous conditions. He's frank about facing the realities of aging—he's now approaching 60—and he reveals a keen eye for the eccentricities of running culture, even inventing a term for something most long-term long-distance runners probably know well: "runner's blues."

But I suspect that the tread running through *What I Talk About* that will appeal to the most readers, especially those who write, run or both, is Murakami's conveyance of the relationship between running and writing, both of which, not coincidentally, he took up around the age of 30. Analogies between running and writing allow Murakami to weigh the relative merits of self-destructive versus healthy behaviour—exercise junky he may be, but Murakami also loves beer and Dunkin' Donuts—of talent and discipline, of pacing versus pushing one's limits. He also offers some interesting techniques for both activities, such as quitting for the day when you still have some juice left in you, a sort of necessary reserve to use tomorrow.

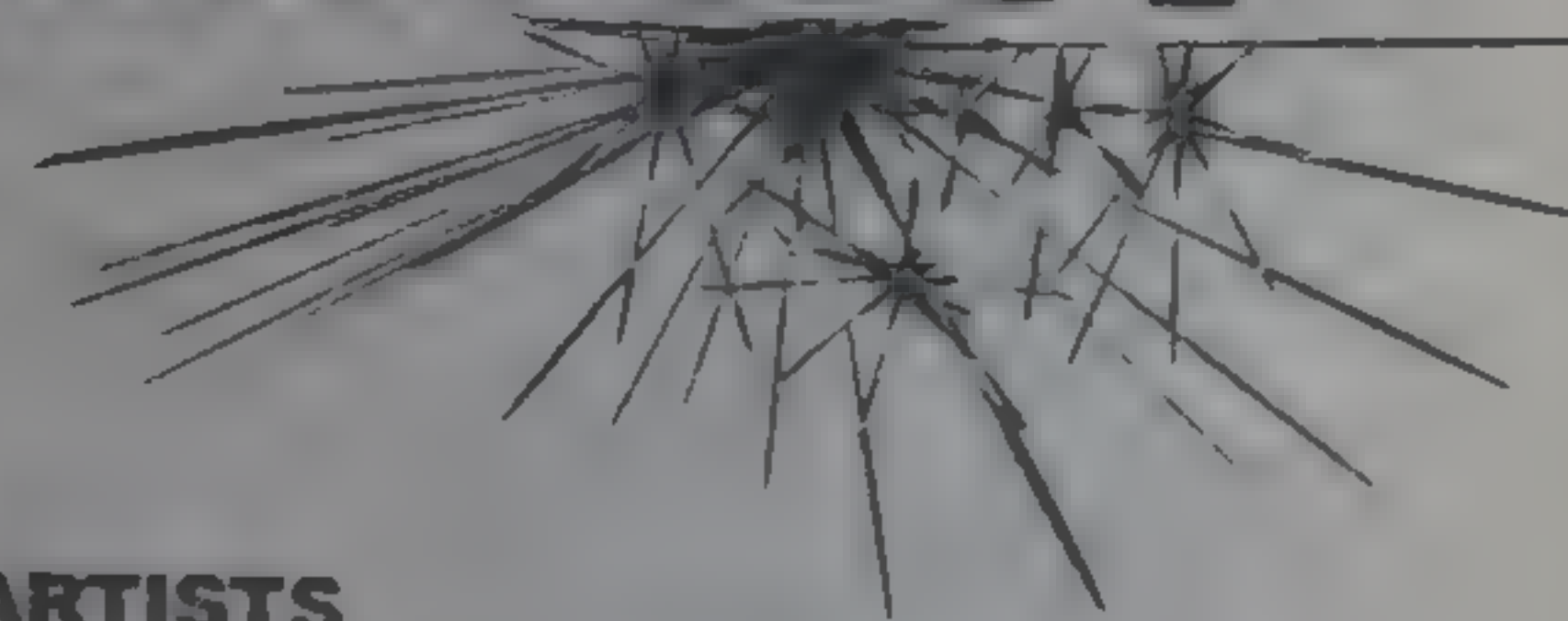
At one point Murakami also mentions how the act of writing fiction releases "a kind of toxin that lies deep in all humanity." As with that stone wall I mentioned earlier, he writes of this mysterious toxin without ever breaking his average guy, down-to-earth tone, as though it were the most acceptable notion in the world. This matter-of-fact treatment of the mysterious if of course something Murakami fans adore about his work, and even in non-fiction, it's hard to imagine a Murakami book without a splash of it. ▽



Sean Borchert

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CALL TO ARTISTS ANIMAL SERVICES BUILDING

The Edmonton Arts Council, on behalf of the City of Edmonton, invites all Canadian and international artists to submit proposals for a public artwork at the Animal Services Building. The artwork proposal should reflect relevance to contemporary art practices. This open competition is held in accordance with the City of Edmonton policy "Percent for Art to Provide and Encourage Art in Public Areas" (C458B).

Budget: \$51,200 CAD (maximum, all inclusive)

Deadline for Submissions: 4:30 PM Friday, August 29, 2008

Installation: March 2010

CALL TO ARTISTS - SOUTH TRANSIT GARAGE

The Edmonton Arts Council, on behalf of the City of Edmonton, invites all Canadian and international artists to submit proposals for a public artwork at the South Transit Garage. The artwork proposal should reflect relevance to contemporary art practices. This open competition is held in accordance with the City of Edmonton policy "Percent for Art to Provide and Encourage Art in Public Areas" (C458B).

Budget: \$80,000 CAD (maximum, all inclusive)

Deadline for Submissions: 4:30 PM Friday, August 29, 2008

Installation: Fall 2009

CALL TO ARTISTS - CENTENNIAL WINDOW

The Edmonton Arts Council, on behalf of the City of Edmonton, invites artists to submit qualifications for the production of the Centennial Window, a stained glass window gift from the City of Edmonton to the Government of Alberta, to be located in the Alberta Legislature Public Gallery Chamber.

Budget: \$50,000 CAD (maximum, all inclusive)

Deadline for Submissions: 4:30 PM Friday, August 29, 2008

Installation: Spring 2009

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NEXT WEEK

This Pullout is your comprehensive guide to every production and event in the arts scene from September 2008 to June 2009.

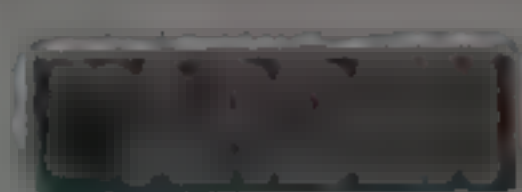
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Early bird special

Fringe groups spread the word and test their plays out with preview shows

PAUL BLINOV / blinov@vuweekly.com

Charting one's path through the tangle of Fringe shows is a daunting task: with more than 150 descending on Old Strathcona within a few weeks, should you wait for published reviews to guide you, or simply start buying tickets, relying on gut feeling alone to find the next Fringe hit?

But then there's option number three: capitalize on the few early bird chances to sneak a peak of the coming 27th annual Fringe festival by taking in some of the preview shows opening this weekend at the Roxy.

"It's that sort of grand old tradition of Broadway plays that go and spend three weeks in Pittsburgh before they come back to New York," explains David Cheoros. His company, **Maa & Paa Theatre**, has a preview show this weekend for their pair of Fringe shows. After doing the same thing last year (with *Letters from Battle River*), he knows how handy an early reaction can be.

"As a playwright and director," he says, "what it really does is force me to make strong choices early, and then gives us a chance to try things out in front of an audience, and see what actually drives forward, and doesn't drive forward, and gives us a chance to fine-tune before we hit the festival."

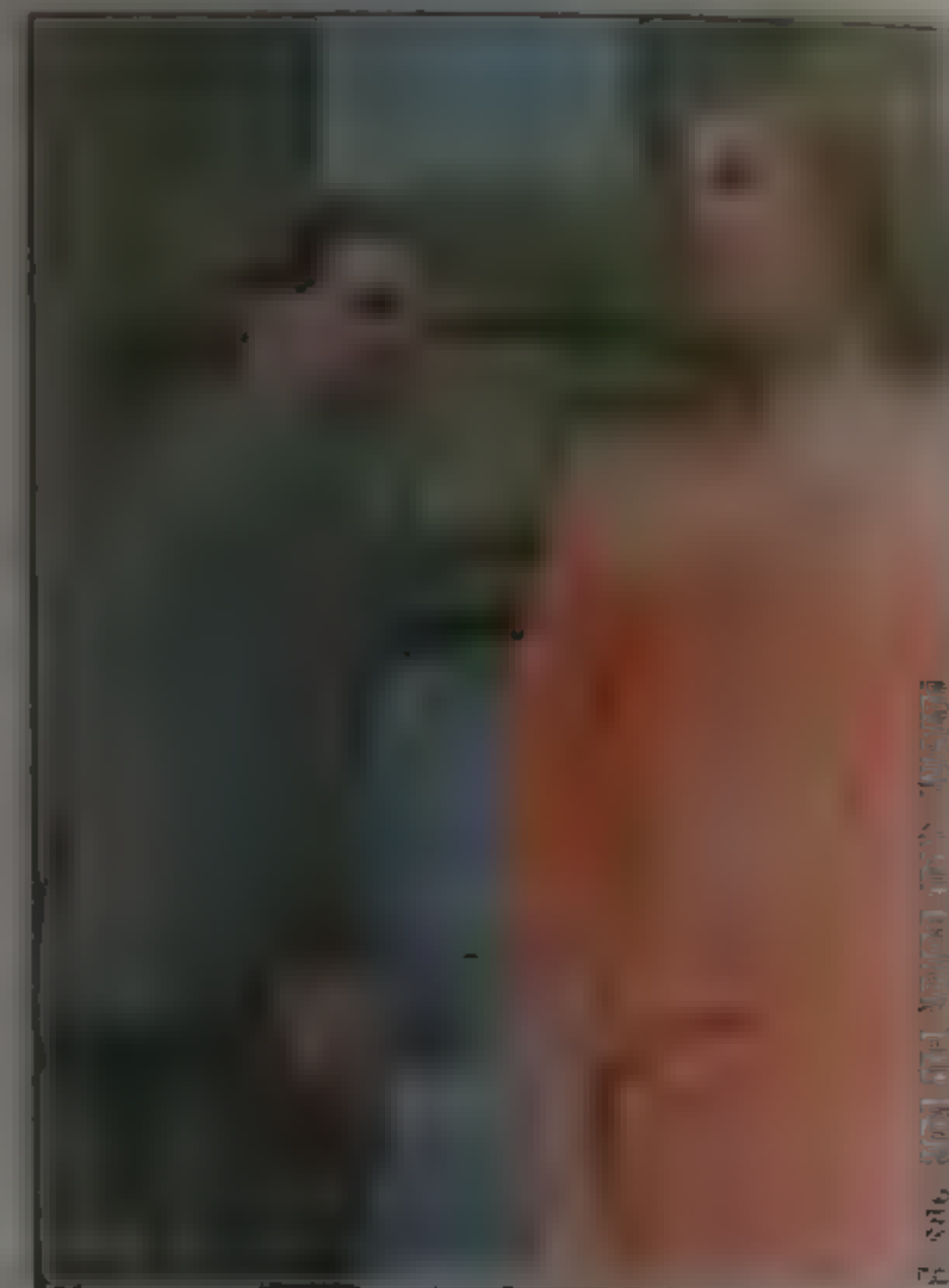
The first of Maa & Paa's shows is steeped in history: Written by Cheoros and his wife, historian Karen Simonson (presumably the "Maa" in the theatre group), *Respecting the Action for Seduction* takes audiences back to the 1934 and the scandal that not only brought down then-Premier John Brownlee, but also permanently expelled the United Farmers of Alberta from government.

Their other play, *An Oak Tree*, is a little less home-grown: licensed from creator/performer Tim Crouch, it stars both local sound-wizard/actor David Clarke and a different guest every night who, curiously, won't know a thing about the play they're in until the curtain rises.

With a risky show like that (and risqué, in the case of *Respecting the Action*), it makes perfect sense for Cheoros test-drive these shows as early as possible, in case major tinkering is needed.

"Both of these shows are pretty ... they're not typical plays," he explains. "They're trying new things, but we want them to be good. We want them to be polished by the time they get to the festival. And this gives us a chance to do that."

"I know a number of people who are writing their fringe shows right now," he continues, laughing. "So to have the luxury of doing a little bit of trying-out and rewriting is extraordinary."



PREVIEW

FRI, AUG 1 (7 PM)

MAA & PAA THEATRE

INCLUDES RESPECTING THE ACTION OF SEDUCTION.

AN OAK TREE

THE ROXY THEATRE (10708 - 124 ST),

\$10 PER SHOW/\$15 FOR BOTH

SATURDAY, AUG 2 (8 PM)

WORMWOOD: A BOHEMIAN

AN FRINGE FUNDRAISER

THE ROXY THEATRE, \$8 - \$10

OF COURSE, he's not the only one hunting for some pre-Fringe audiences: offering more like an appetizer platter than Maa & Paa's main course **Wormwood: a Bohemian Fringe Fundraiser**, collects excerpts from nine upcoming Fringe works.

Spanning brief samples from the likes of hosting company SurrealSoReal Theatre's *Eleanor: A Bohemian Fantasy*'s love triangle drama to a taste of local veteran-sketchers Mostly Water Theatre's new comedy offering, *1-Up* (you know, like in Mario), organizer Vincent Forcier wasn't expecting the overwhelming response he received from artists he asked to be involved.

"I asked about 10 different groups, and nine of them said yes," he explains. "That was really surprising to me. I didn't realize that so many people were up for doing this kind of thing just for being asked."

Though really a fundraiser for SurrealSoReal's show, Forcier says he'll be happy just to break even (he's also booked some live music, and a *Guitar Hero* tournament). After all, parading tantalizing clips from nine Fringe shows in front of an audience is bound to do them all good.

"I think the audiences will be able to shape what they want to see a little better, based on what we're showing them," he explains. "Catching five to 10 minute glances will hopefully pique interest, even if audiences weren't sure they were going to see that show, based on this name and picture in the program." v



'94 problems

Nostalgia almost kills a sweetly standard coming-of-age story in *The Wackness*

DAVID BERRY / david@vuweekly.com

Considering all it's got going against it, *The Wackness* probably shouldn't work as well it does. For all its faults, though, Jonathan Levine's prematurely nostalgic coming-of-age story manages to be occasionally funny and occasionally moving, trading between the two often enough that it doesn't quite drown in its faults.

The key part there is not quite: Levine tries his damndest to choke out his own sweet sentimentality and often bombastic humour with hackneyed storytelling and needless accoutrements. The latter is by far the most annoying, popping up (again and again and again) in the form of mostly pointless period tics, slapped into the film with all the naturalness of a 65-year-old Ben Kingsley rapping on a Wu Tang song.

The constant, blindingly obvious reminders that we're in 1994 New York would be more forgivable if Levine did a better job of convincing us it was some kind of culturally significant time, but he seems more interested in set dressing than cultural relevance: '62 this ain't. Sure, there are some passing references to Giuliani's tough-on-crime stance—and an incredible sound track for anyone who happens to be a fan of early/mid-'90s east coast rap—but they're so tossed off and self-contained they don't even suggest things in New York are changing all that much, let alone why it would be important if they did. The setting is so utterly meaningless Levine can't even write his characters as though they live in it: if it wasn't for a few

NOSTALGIA

OPENING AUG. 1
THE WACKNESS
WRITTEN & DIRECTED BY JONATHAN LEVINE
STARRING JOSH PECK, BEN KINGSLEY,
OLIVIA THIRLBY, JAMIE JANSSEN
★★★

bad haircuts and the occasional "dope" shoehorned into the end of a conversation, they'd be entirely indistinguishable from anyone walking the streets today.

That fact only draw more attention to the fact that, as a coming-of-age story, this is almost numbingly rote. Luke (Josh Peck) might spend his days selling pot, but that's the only thing that separates him from any other slightly adrift, confused youth: he's got a girl he's trying to figure out how to get along with (Olivia Thirlby), an unconventional wise old elder (Kingsley) and of course he learns some valuable life lessons by the time it's all over. If there was something unique about the time or place, that would be elevated ever so slightly, but as is, it's nothing we haven't seen before, and usually more poignantly.

STILL, EVEN WITH its drawbacks, *The Wackness* isn't without its charms. A large part of that has to do with its two young leads. Peck drifts through the film with a mopey hangdog, perfect for a teen trying to while away the summer days before life actually starts, but it also makes his rare moments of emotional life that much more honest, his blank face bursting into one of pure joy or abject heartache. Thirlby, mostly removed of the needless quirk she

handled quite ably in *Juno*, is Peck's opposite, someone far more assured and lively, but just as evocative in the right moments: her reaction to Luke's premature declaration of love, for instance, is half shock at her own power over him and half confusion at how he could interpret what she's doing as anything but teenage experimentation.

Levine also manages to get in a few astute observations, especially when it comes to drugs: there isn't a moment in the movie when his characters aren't on something, whether it's a cocktail of psych pills, mushrooms, pot or something as benign as a cigarette. Levine seems able to recognize that all his characters are masking some level of dissatisfaction with drug use, whether it's socially sanctioned, like Kingsley's medicine cabinet, or has to be hidden in Luke's fake ice cream cart. It's also refreshing that he remains largely silent on the subject, offering a bit of a critique of the psychiatrist-approved meds but still having Kingsley return to them in the end: Levine isn't interested in judging, just showing how his characters get by.

If Levine could have kept his mostly sharp eye for character at the forefront, *The Wackness* would have been an astute if not wildly original boy-meets-world story. Instead, he slaps on an endless parade of gaudily nostalgic references, to the point where they not only dull its resonance but openly distract from the story itself. Hopefully next time out Levine can leave the period behind, and make a movie that focuses more on character than costume. ▼

Closing time for TNT

FLICKS | DVD DETECTIVE
JIMMY BRADY & QUINN CROOK
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BRIAN GIBSON / brian@vuweekly.com

Back in the 1990s, when England's *Prime Suspect* series cannoned across the ocean, landing on North America's airwaves with a splash, what stood out was the whosolvesit—Jane Tennison (Helen Mirren, in her most famous no-nonsense role). These days, a woman-in-charge is no new angle in the TV mystery genre, but TNT's series *The Closer*—its third season out on DVD—still gets high-grade mileage out of the concept.

Deputy Chief Brenda Leigh Johnson (Kyra Sedgwick) heads the Priority Homicide Division in Los Angeles, and the first season saw her face grudging sexism from male underlings, fuelled by the news Johnson once had a relationship with the man now her boss, Assistant Police Chief Will Pope (JK Simmons, not far from his perturbed boss in the Spider-Man films).

Sedgwick plays Johnson, hailing from Atlanta, with that familiar Southern twang ("if y'all") and a Southern belle demeanour that can melt in a heartbeat. The heartbeat is sent racing whenever Johnson confronts a suspect, especially in the interrogation room. Johnson is the wolf in sheepish clothing—once she gets her man or woman, she'll break him or her into a revelation or confession, closing the deal. And that's the clincher in *The Closer*—the most basic moments of drama come at the highest point of the mystery.

The plot twists are there, but it's these moments of near-visceral emotion that make the series work so well. From the opening sequence, cinematic in its build-up—flashes of a crime scene punctuated with silent title credits—the show establishes its gravitas. The grief of a parent, finding out their child is dead, will lacerate a scene. In "Home-wrecker," the bewildered rage of the killer spittles and flecks onto the screen. "Ruby" is almost unbearable in its relentless hunt for the abductor of a little girl, and it's easily the series' darkest exploration of the catacombs of race, vigilantism and villainy.

Episodes like those, the personal investment a police investigator can develop with the case and the nicely comic counter-punch of Johnson's shambling efforts at a domestic life with FBI Agent Fritz Howard (Jon Tenney), push *The Closer* beyond its lapses. Johnson likes to munch on candy or chocolate from her special stash in her desk drawer, and she can't tell Dad that she lives with Fritz. And Fritz is so frustrated he can't move his stuff in that one day he dumps it all in the house. And then this

slightly flustered, I-can't-deal-with-the-right-now woman goes off to work and organizes her team around another investigation of a grisly murder, tracks down key witnesses and grills suspects

THE SHOW IS *The Closer* is a TV series, a medium, though. Any strong sense of the city is muted, with the show feeling too set-ish. Seasons run a little long; plot turns can be a touch convenient and some characters are reduced to stock reactions—the Watson-like Pope looks on, perplexed, as the Holmes-like Johnson marches off towards the solution, after having a "Eureka!" moment. Episodes tend to cop out on the political it raises—the settling dust of the 1992 LA race riots in "Grave Doubts" is carefully sifted through—and its own formula can become a little too obvious, with some episodes too neatly wrapped up, even "Ruby."

But the writing is pretty sharp, most of Sedgwick and Co.'s portrayals are nuanced (other stand-outs are grumpy coot Provenza, played by GW Bailey, who redeems himself for all those *Police Academy* films, and Corey Reynolds as Johnson's thoughtful right-hand man, Sergeant Gabriel), and the portrait of her awkward, petty, semi-sweet relationship is casually true to life. Even as the department faces budget pressures, members of Johnson's team stake their own emotional investments in cases. "Dumb Luck" is too broad (especially with its blonde broad) but "Saving Face" doesn't overindulge in black humour managing to skewer skin-deep LA pretense while uncovering the strange absurdity of death.

The discs include gag reels, with the cast forgetting lines or "corpsing" (breaking into laughter), deleted scenes (which should have been tied to their episodes), and a featurette, "The Art of Interrogation." Former interrogators explain the standard postures and personas they adopted, talk about reading the suspect's mannerisms and movements, and note how patient you need to be (which an episode's 45 minutes can't allow for). Much of the show's realism is due to the influence of executive producer Gil Garcetti, a former LA District Attorney. And series creator James Duff is intent on not showing any violent coercion of a suspect.

This non-24 stance only opens up *The Closer*. When Johnson presses one witness in a hospital bed or coldly lies to another, she seems to be going too far to seek justice for the victims. But when a woman's grief keeps beyond the insoluble and into the unimaginable, Johnson's methods seem warranted. And it's at those moments in these whodunits that life's true mystery—haunting, insoluble death—flashes darkly forth. ▼

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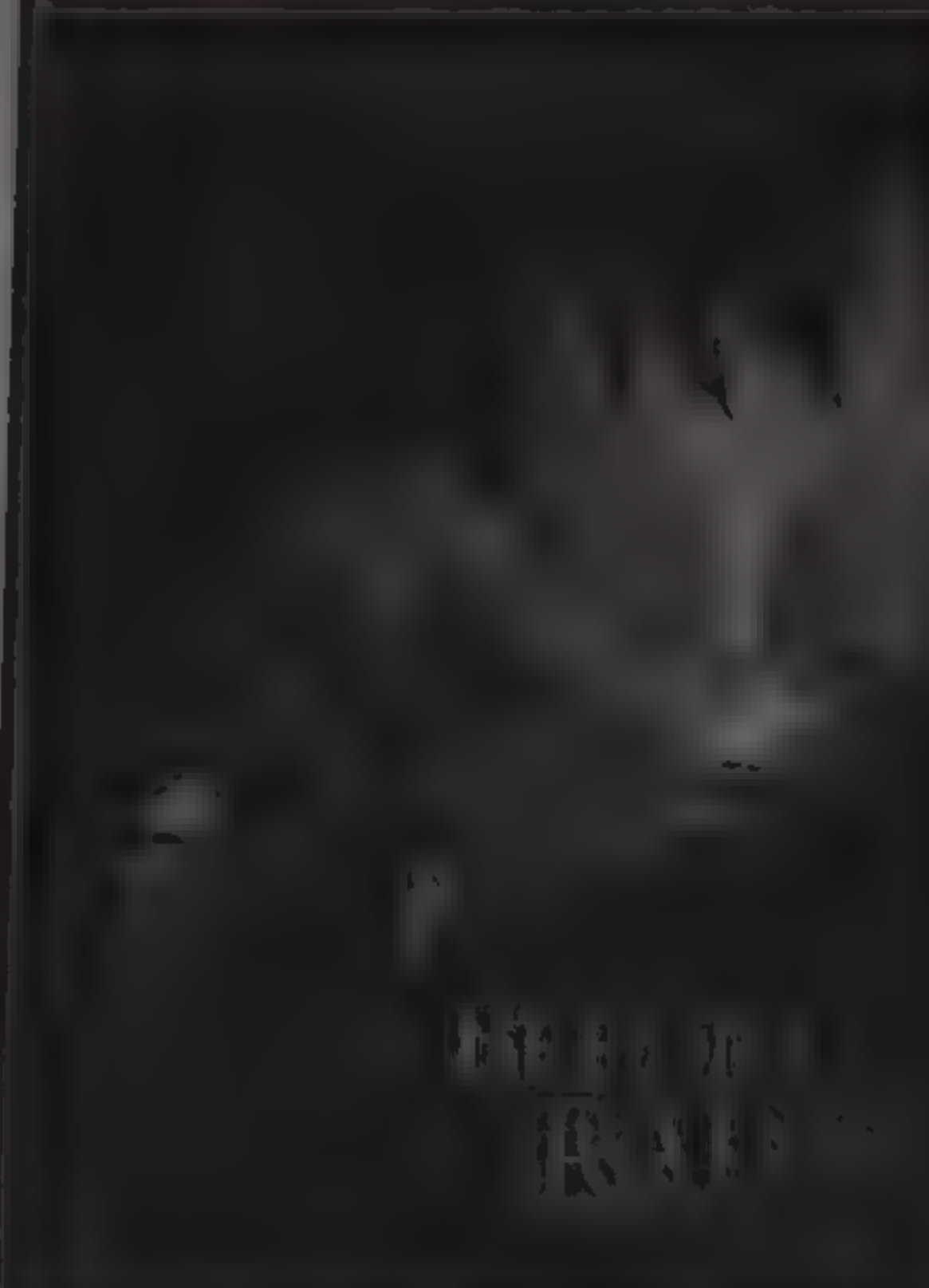


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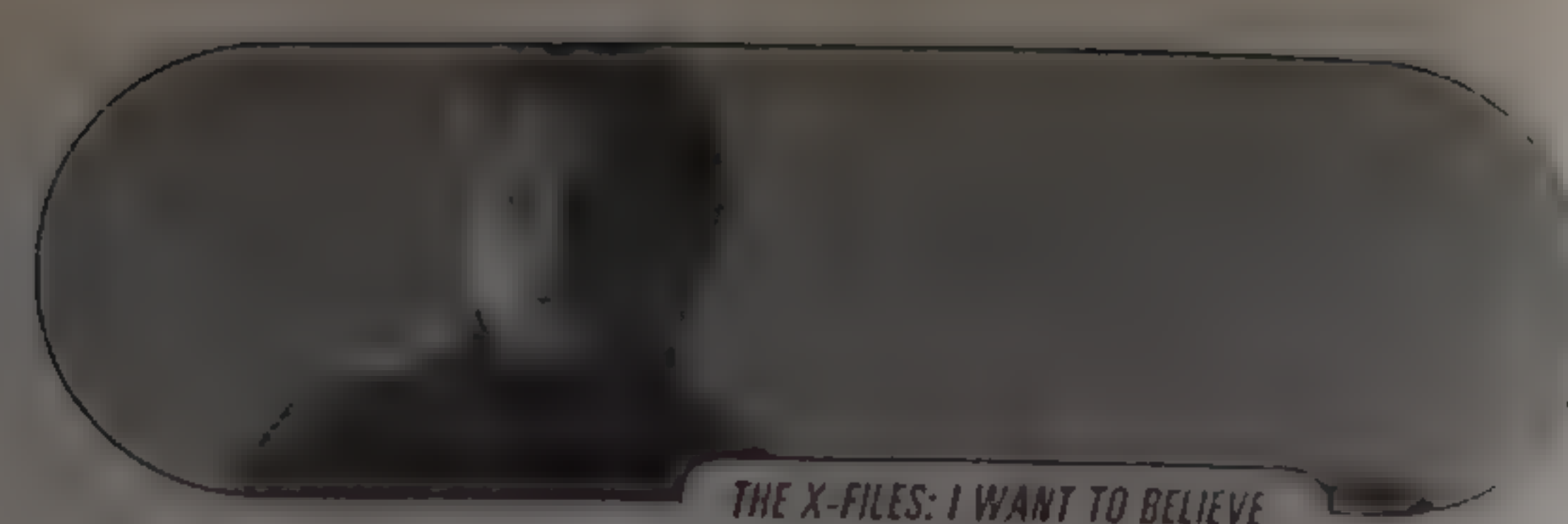
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QUICK REVIEWS FILM CAPSULES



THE X-FILES: I WANT TO BELIEVE

NOW PLAYING

STEP BROTHERS
DIRECTED BY ADAM MCKAY
WRITTEN BY ADAM MCKAY, WILL FERRELL
STARRING FERRELL, JOHN C. REILLY
★★★

JONATHAN BUSCH / jonathan@vuwweekly.com
The repressed sexuality of boyhood is romanticized, and possibly made a little subversive, in Adam McKay's *Step Brothers*, an absurd comedy starring Will Ferrell and John C. Reilly as dopey-kids-for-life who still live at home with their respective parents. While the film is as misguided and simple-minded as its protagonists, it suggests the virtues of a juvenile livelihood that is as much about personal freedom as fart jokes and Chewbacca masks.

One morning, while their 40-year-old sons Brennan (Ferrell) and Dale (Reilly) are lazing around at home, Robert (Richard Jenkins) and Nancy (Mary Steenburgen) meet at a work function, hump in a hotel room and fall in love. Their offspring, having never flew the coop nor grown out of being selfish boys, are more than reluctant to accept their parents' shacking up, as they must learn to share



STEP BROTHERS

Dale and Robert's house as a family. Brennan (Ferrell) is a shy and insecure Judds fan while Dale (Reilly) is a porn-collecting, overconfident "musician," and both would rather see the other dead.

But after mutual dislike for Brennan's douchebag brother Derek (Adam Scott) is shared, they realize that not only might they be able to get along, but they're practically the same person (having both the same favourite dinosaur and famous male celebrity they would sleep with). Robert and Nancy, being grown-ups, have dreams of their own, and inadvertently thwart Brennan and Dale's sudden enjoyment of each others' company, forcing them to find jobs and think about the possibility of a future away from the nest.

Despite that as a whole *Step Brothers* is hardly cohesive or fulfilling, Ferrell and Reilly's return to the screen has them indirectly commenting on their own brotherhood as comedians. What occurs is a breakdown of the creatively stifled maturity that post Gen-X masculinity is responsible for, where sincere engagement with our childhood passions is lost on the pursuit of consumer capital and adult male egotism. In one poignant scene, Derek commands his wife to get in the car with, "Honey, Dane Cook is on pay-per-view in 20 minutes!"

Such an argument contradicts who really profits from a film starring Will Fer-

rell, but *Step Brothers* trusts itself from the beginning (though maybe a little much considering how quickly it ushers such a half-assed plot and resolutions). But Brennan and Dale's homebody interests are thoughtful, dirty and bizarre (not to mention completely void of marijuana use), and form characters well worth spending time with.

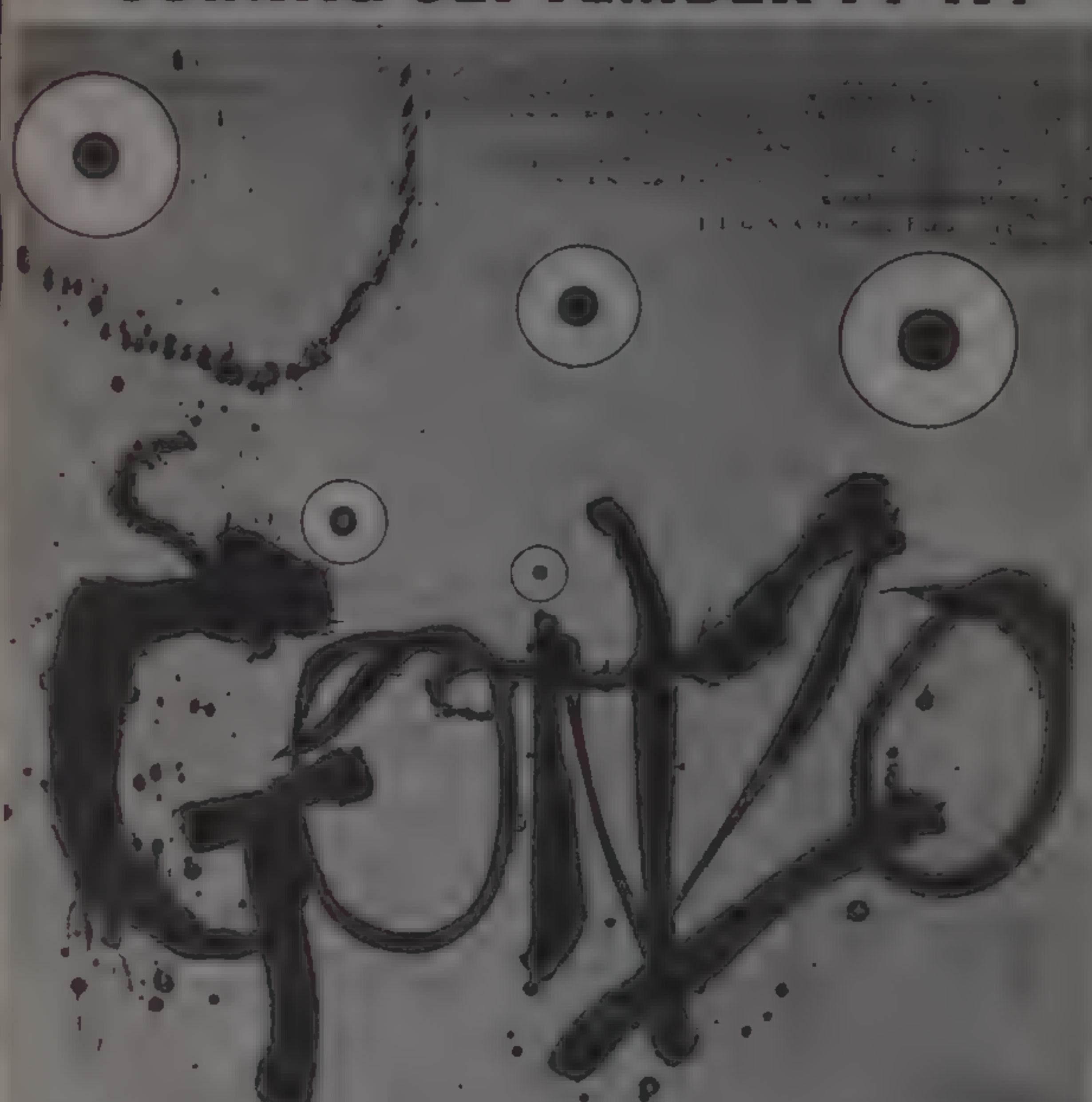
THE X-FILES: I WANT TO BELIEVE

DIRECTED BY CHRIS CARTER
WRITTEN BY FRANK SPONITZ, CARTER
STARRING DAVID DUCHOVNY, GILLIAN ANDERSON, AMANDA PEY, JULY KENNEDY
★★

JOSEF BRAUN / josef@vuwweekly.com
When former Agents Mulder (David Duchovny) and Scully (Gillian Anderson) find themselves once again standing outside the threshold of some gloomy office within the labyrinth of FBI headquarters in *The X-Files: I Want to Believe*, they're greeted by a cute if inconsequential sight-gag: on one side of the door hangs a portrait of George W. Bush, on the other, one of J. Edgar Hoover. I guess the idea is that during whatever era there's always going to be some crackpot and/or nincompoop in the executive branch trying to steer the ship. In other words, things never really change much in the shadowy, bureaucratically fraught

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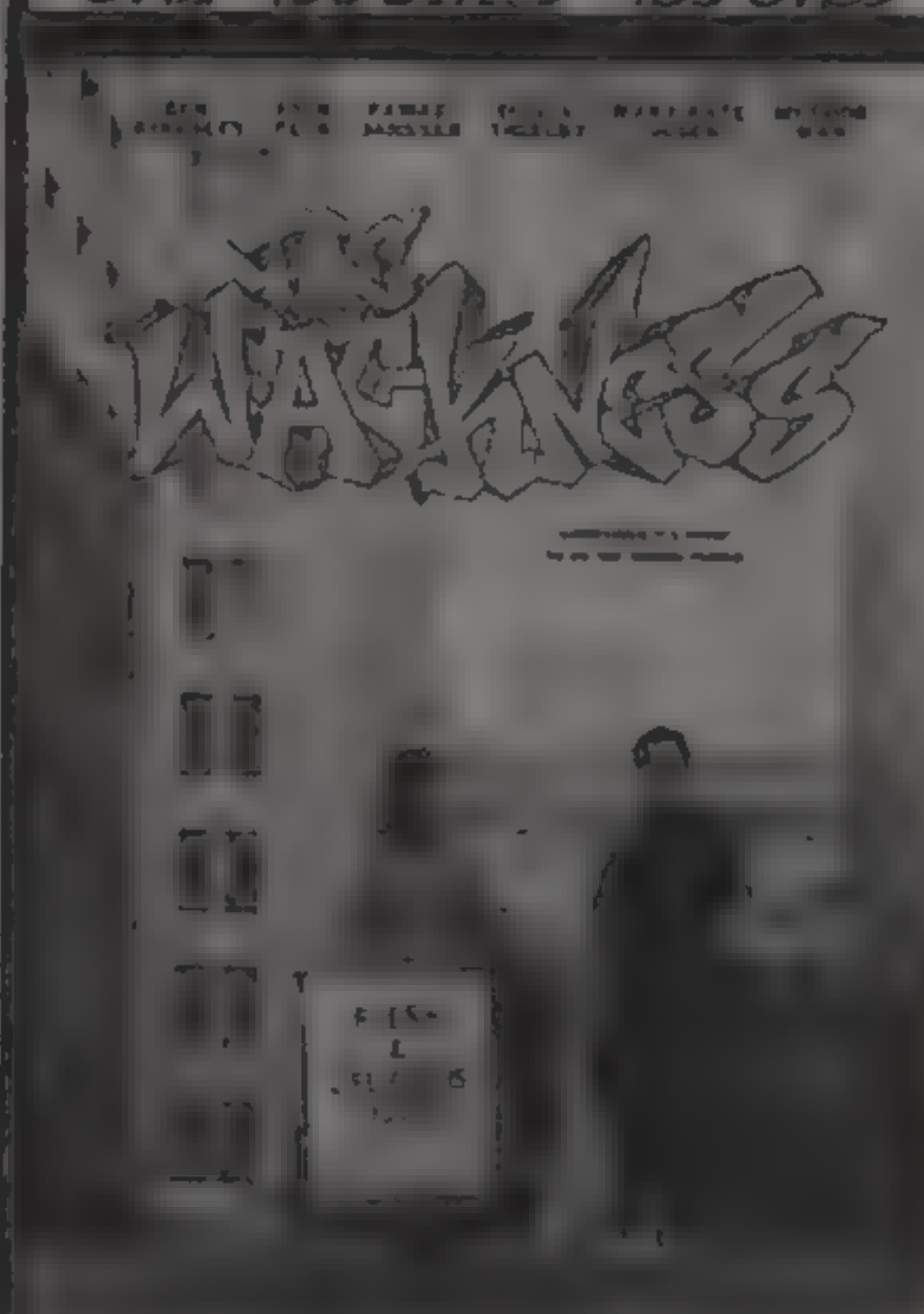
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...the TV show turned-
...purchase
...is a problem, though,
...attempting to meet the
...of a distinct form. *I Want to*
...feels like an episode of *The X-*
...that runs roughly an hour too
...ected by show creator Chris
...movie's transitions, scene
...and noisy 'boo' effects, not
...is one of Mark Snow's boiler-
...and Mark Freeborn's generic
...designs, feel overwhelmingly
...a serial drama tailored for small
...and smaller expectations. The
...in which it departs radically
...standards is, unfortunately,
...its pacing, which is remarkably
...at times even aimless. The basic
...of Carter and co-writer Frank
...script is serviceable, but you
...help but feel these guys haven't
...the formula that elevates such a
...to the level of urgency, stakes
...endurance needed to fuel a feature
...film.

As *I Want to Believe* begins, Scully's
working at a Catholic pediatric hospital,
while Mulder has opted for backwoods
reclusion, killing time clipping newspa-
pers and working on his beard. When an
agent is kidnapped and a psychic, child
molesting priest (Billy Connolly) stands as
the FBI's sole, rather dubious hope for
finding her, Mulder and Scully are brought
in. The initially reluctant Mulder is swiftly
back in his element, though Scully is less
enthusiased about returning to "the dark-
ness." She's got enough on her plate,
what with dying kids, agonizing parents
and moody clergymen expecting her to
perform miracles. In juxtaposing her trials
at the hospital with the FBI's search, the
movie's title assumes a multitude of vari-
ations, all of them boiling down to the
necessity of faith when faced with dilem-
mas that stymie mere reason.

If only either story rose above Carter's
over-calculated thematic. Things don't
add up, timelines make no sense, sup-
porting characters are woefully flat, and
the best thing by far—Mulder and Scul-
ly's conflicted, bittersweet romance—is
given short shrift. Carter doesn't even
bother to show us how they find them-
selves in bed together after many years
apart. It's a shame, especially since
Duchovny has slowly learned to transmit
tenderness, and Anderson, with that
transfixing gaze of hers, at once skeptical
and flush with worry, is truly one of the
finest, most unusual, most underused
American actors of her generation. ▼



FILM WEEKLY

CHABA THEATRE-JASPER

6094 Connaught Dr. Jasper, 852-4749

THE DARK KNIGHT (PG, violence, frightening scenes, not recommended for young children)
Daily 1:30, 4:10, 7:25, 10:40

MAMMA MIA! (PG)
Daily 1:30, 7:00, 9:10

CINEMA CITY MOVIES 12

130 Ave 50 St. 472-8772

MEET DAVE (PG)
Fri, Sun-Thu 2:05, 4:45, 7:25, 10:40
Daily 1:30, 4:45, 7:25, 9:35, 11:50

KIT KITTREDGE: AN AMERICAN GIRL (G)
Fri, Sun-Thu 1:50, 4:05, 6:45, 9:10; Sat 1:50, 4:05, 6:45, 9:10, 11:25

SON OF RAINBOW (PG, coarse language, not recommended for young children)
Fri, Sun-Thu 1:55, 4:20, 6:50, 9:15; Sat 1:55, 4:20, 6:50, 9:15, 11:40

IRON MAN (PG, violence, not recommended for young children)
Fri, Sun-Thu 1:25, 4:15, 7:05, 9:50; Sat 1:25, 4:15, 7:05, 9:50, 12:20

HORTON HEARS A WHOLE (G)
Daily 1:35, 4:25, 6:55

THE HAPPENING (14A, gory scenes)
Fri, Sun-Thu 2:00, 4:15, 7:05, 9:30; Sat 2:00, 4:15, 7:05, 9:30, 11:35

THE INCREDIBLE HULK (PG, violence, frightening scenes)
Fri, Sun-Thu 1:45, 4:30, 7:15, 9:55; Sat 1:45, 4:30, 7:15, 9:55, 12:20

YOU DON'T MESS WITH THE ZOHAN (14A, sexual content)
Fri, Sun-Thu 1:40, 4:35, 7:20, 9:55; Sat 1:40, 4:35, 7:20, 9:55, 12:15

THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA: PRINCE CASPIAN (PG, violence)
Fri, Sun-Thu 1:20, 2:30, 4:40, 6:30, 7:45, 9:40; Sat 1:20, 2:30, 4:40, 6:30, 7:45, 9:40, 10:45

WHAT HAPPENS IN VEGAS (PG, coarse language, not recommended for children)
Fri, Sun-Thu 1:30, 4:10, 7:10, 9:35; Sat 1:30, 4:10, 7:10, 9:35, 12:00

SPEED RACER (PG)
Daily 1:15, 4:00

MADE OF HONOR (PG, sexual content, coarse language)
Fri, Sun-Thu 9:20; Sat 9:20, 11:30

THE FORBIDDEN KINGDOM (PG, violence)
Daily 7:30, 10:00

CINEPLEX ODEON NORTH

1420 1st Ave. 472-2234

THE MUMMY: TOMB OF THE DRAGON EMPEROR (PG, violence, frightening scenes)
No Passes Daily 12:10, 2:00, 3:20, 4:50, 6:40, 7:40, 9:20, 10:30

SWING VOTE (PG, coarse language)
Fri-Mon, Wed-Thu 1:20, 4:00, 7:00, 9:50; Tue 4:00, 7:00, 9:50; Sat and Strollers Screening Tue 1:00

THE SISTERHOOD OF THE TRAVELING PANTS 2 (PG)
Wed-Thu 1:05, 3:50, 6:45, 9:25

PINEAPPLE EXPRESS (18A, substance abuse)
No passes Wed-Thu 1:45, 4:45, 7:35, 10:25

X-FILES: I WANT TO BELIEVE (14A, violence)
Daily 1:30, 4:10, 7:05, 9:40

STEP BROTHERS (14A, coarse language, crude content, not recommended for children)
Daily 12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:50, 10:35

MAMMA MIA! (PG)
Daily 1:00, 3:30, 6:50, 9:30

JOURNEY TO THE CENTER OF THE EARTH (PG, not recommended for young children)
Fri-Sun 1:20, 4:00, 7:00, 9:50; Sat 1:20, 4:00, 7:00, 9:50

HELLBOY 2 THE GOLDEN ARMY (14A)
Daily 1:40, 4:40, 7:25, 10:20

THE DARK KNIGHT (PG, violence, frightening scenes, not recommended for young children)
No Passes Fri-Tue 12:20, 1:10, 3:10, 3:40, 4:30, 6:30, 7:10, 8:00, 10:00, 10:40, Wed-Thu 12:20, 1:10, 3:40, 4:30, 7:10, 8:00, 10:40

WANTED (18A, gory scenes, brutal violence)
Fri-Tue 3:50, 9:15

GET SMART (PG, violence, coarse language)
Fri-Tue 1:15, 6:45

KUNG FU PANDA (PG)

Fri-Tue 12:00, 2:45; Wed-Thu 11:40

HANCOCK

Daily 12:50, 3:15, 5:30, 8:10, 10:20

CINEPLEX ODEON SOUTH

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SWING VOTE (PG, coarse language)
Strollers Screening Tue 1:00

X-FILES: I WANT TO BELIEVE (14A, violence)
Daily 1:10, 4:10, 7:40, 10:15

STEP BROTHERS (14A, coarse language, crude content, not recommended for children)
Fri-Tue 11:50, 2:20, 4:45, 7:20, 9:20, 10:10; Wed-Thu 11:50, 2:20, 4:45, 7:20, 10:10

SPACE CHIMPS (G)
Fri-Tue 11:40

MAMMA MIA! (PG)
Daily 1:00, 3:40, 6:45, 9:40

JOURNEY TO THE CENTER OF THE EARTH (PG, not recommended for young children)
RealD Daily 12:10, 2:40, 4:50, 7:10, 9:45

HELLBOY 2 THE GOLDEN ARMY (14A)
Fri-Tue, Thu 1:50, 4:40, 7:45, 10:40, Wed 1:50, 10:40

THE DARK KNIGHT (PG, violence, frightening scenes, not recommended for young children)
No passes Daily 11:30, 12:30, 1:30, 3:00, 4:00, 5:00, 6:30, 7:30, 8:30, 10:00, 10:45

HANCOCK (PG, violence, coarse language, crude content)
Daily 12:50, 3:15, 5:30, 8:10, 10:20

WALL-E (G)
Fri-Tue 1:20, 4:15, 7:00, 9:30; Wed 1:20, 4:15, 7:00, 9:30; Thu 1:20, 4:15, 9:20

WANTED (18A, gory scenes, brutal violence)
Fri-Tue 5:10, 7:50, 10:30

GET SMART (PG, violence, coarse language)
Fri-Mon 12:40, 3:50, 6:40; Tue 3:50, 6:40

KUNG FU PANDA (PG)
Fri-Tue 12:00, 2:45; Wed-Thu 11:40

THE SISTERHOOD OF THE TRAVELING PANTS 2 (PG)
Wed-Thu 12:40, 3:45, 6:40, 9:30

PINEAPPLE EXPRESS (18A, substance abuse)
No passes Wed-Thu 12:00, 2:45, 5:20, 7:50, 10:30

CINEPLEX WEST MALL 8

1420 1st Ave. 472-2234

KIT KITTREDGE: AN AMERICAN GIRL (G)
Fri-Sun 1:55, 4:25, 6:50, 9:00; Mon-Thu 4:25, 6:50, 9:00

THE HAPPENING (14A, gory scenes)
Fri-Sun 1:15, 4:15, 7:00, 9:15; Mon-Thu 4:15, 7:00, 9:15

THE INCREDIBLE HULK (PG, violence, frightening scenes)
Fri-Sun 1:40, 4:40, 7:20, 9:45; Mon-Thu 4:40, 7:20, 9:45

YOUNG PEOPLE F...ING (18A, sexual content)
Daily 4:20, 9:10

YOU DON'T MESS WITH THE ZOHAN (14A, sexual content)
Fri-Sun 1:35, 4:10, 6:45, 9:20; Mon-Thu 4:10, 6:45, 9:20

THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA: PRINCE CASPIAN (PG, violence)
Fri-Sun 2:00, 4:00, 6:30, 9:00; Mon-Thu 4:00, 6:30, 9:00

WHAT HAPPENS IN VEGAS (PG, coarse language, not recommended for children)
Fri-Sun 1:45, 4:10, 7:00, 9:40; Mon-Thu 4:50, 7:20, 10:10

IRON MAN (PG, violence, not recommended for young children)
Fri-Sun 1:40, 4:10, 7:00, 9:50; Mon-Thu 4:30, 7:10, 10:00

HAROLD AND KUMAR ESCAPE FROM GUANTANAMO BAY (14A, sexual content, crude language)
Fri-Tue 1:40, 4:40, 7:40, 10:40; Wed-Thu 1:40, 4:40, 7:40, 10:40

CITY CENTRE 9

10200 102 Ave. 421-7090

THE MUMMY: TOMB OF THE DRAGON EMPEROR (PG, violence, frightening scenes)
Daily 12:10, 2:00, 3:20, 4:50, 6:40, 7:40, 9:20, 10:30

X-FILES: I WANT TO BELIEVE

(14A, violence)
Fri-Tue 12:10, 3:00, 6:55, 9:30

STEP BROTHERS

(14A, coarse language, crude content, not recommended for children)
Daily 12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:50, 10:35

JOURNEY TO THE CENTER OF THE EARTH 3D (PG, not recommended for young children)
Digital Presentation Fri-Tue 12:50, 3:15, 6:45, 9:15

THE DARK KNIGHT (PG, violence, frightening scenes, not recommended for young children)
Digital Presentation Fri-Tue 12:50, 3:15, 6:45, 9:15; Wed-Thu 12:00, 3:10, 6:30, 9:45

MAMMA MIA! (PG)
Dolby Stereo Digital Fri-Mon 12:20, 3:40, 6:55, 9:10; Tue 12:20, 3:40, 9:20; Wed-Thu 12:15, 3:15, 6:35, 9:00

SWING VOTE (PG, coarse language)
DTS Stereo Digital Fri-Tue 12:30, 3:20, 7:00, 9:40; Wed-Thu 12:30, 3:20, 7:15, 9:55

PINEAPPLE EXPRESS (18A, substance abuse)
Digital Presentation, no passes Wed-Thu 12:50, 3:35, 6:55, 9:30

JOURNEY TO THE CENTER OF THE EARTH (PG, not recommended for young children)
Thu, July 31: 1:20, 3:20, 5:20, 7:20, 9:30

WALL-E (G)
Thu, July 31: 1:30, 3:30, 5:30, 7:35

HELLBOY 2 THE GOLDEN ARMY (14A)
Thu, July 31: 9:45

STEP BROTHERS (14A, coarse language, crude content, not recommended for children)
No passes Thu, July 31: 1:00, 3:00, 5:00, 7:00, 9:00

CLAREVIEW 10

1420 1st Ave. 472-2234

HELLBOY 2 THE GOLDEN ARMY (14A)
Fri-Tue 6:45, 9:35

X-FILES: I WANT TO BELIEVE (14A, violence)
Daily 12:40, 3:30, 7:05, 9:30

STEP BROTHERS (14A, coarse language, crude content, not recommended for children)
Daily 1:30, 4:50, 7:25, 9:55

JOURNEY TO THE CENTER OF THE EARTH 3D (PG, not recommended for young children)
Daily 1:50, 4:40, 7:10, 9:20

THE DARK KNIGHT (PG, violence, frightening scenes, not recommended for young children)
No passes Fri-Tue 12:15, 1:10, 3:20, 4:30, 6:35, 7:50, 9:40; Wed-Thu 12:15, 3:20, 6:35, 9:40

SPACE CHIMPS (G)
Daily 12:30, 2:40, 4:45

MAMMA MIA! (PG)
Daily 1:25, 4:15, 6:40, 9:10

WALL-E (G)
Fri-Tue 1:40, 4:10

HANCOCK (PG, violence, coarse language, crude content)
Daily 7:20, 10:00

SWING VOTE (PG, coarse language)
Daily 1:00, 4:20, 7:00, 9:45

THE SISTERHOOD OF THE TRAVELING PANTS 2 (PG)
No passes Wed-Thu 12:50, 3:50, 6:45, 9:35

PINEAPPLE EXPRESS (18A, substance abuse)
No passes Wed-Thu 1:10, 4:30, 7:15, 10:00

GALAXY-SHERWOOD PARK

1420 1st Ave. 472-2234

THE MUMMY: TOMB OF THE DRAGON EMPEROR (PG, violence, frightening scenes)
No passes Daily 12:15, 1:00, 3:10, 4:10, 6:20, 7:20, 9:30

SWING VOTE (PG, coarse language)
Daily 1:15, 4:30, 7:25, 10:10

X-FILES: I WANT TO BELIEVE (14A, violence)
Daily 12:25, 3:40, 7:15, 10:15

STEP BROTHERS (14A, coarse language, crude content, not recommended for children)
Daily 12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:50, 10:35

THE DARK KNIGHT (PG, violence, frightening scenes, not recommended for young children)
No passes Fri-Tue 12:15, 1:10, 3:20, 4:30, 6:35, 7:50, 9:40; Wed-Thu 12:15, 3:20, 6:35, 9:40

MAMMA MIA! (PG)
Daily 1:25, 4:15, 6:40, 9:10

HELLBOY 2 THE GOLDEN ARMY (14A)
Daily 1:40, 4:40, 7:25, 10:20

WALL-E (G)
Fri-Tue 12:05, 3:05, 7:05, Wed-Thu 12:05, 3:05, 7:05

HANCOCK (PG, violence, coarse lan-

guage, crude content)
Fri-Tue 12:10, 3:00, 6:55, 9:30

THE SISTERHOOD OF THE TRAVELING PANTS 2 (PG)
Wed-Thu 12:15, 3:45, 7:05, 9:50

PINEAPPLE EXPRESS (18A, substance abuse)
No Passes Wed-Thu 12:45, 4:15, 7:45, 10:40

GARNEAU

1420 1st Ave. 472-2234

THE WACKNESS (18A)
Daily 6:50, 9:10; Sat, Sun, Mon 2:00

GRANDIN THEATRE

Grandin Mall, Sir Winston Churchill Ave. St. West 472-2234

Date of Issue only: Thu, July 31

THE DARK KNIGHT (PG, violence, frightening scenes, not recommended for young children)
No passes Thu, July 31: 12:50, 3:45, 6:40, 9:25

MAMMA MIA! (PG)
No passes Thu, July 31: 1:10, 3:15, 5:25, 7:30, 9:40

JOURNEY TO THE CENTER OF THE EARTH (PG, not recommended for young children)
Thu, July 31: 1:20, 3:20, 5:20, 7:20, 9:30

WALL-E (G)
Thu, July 31: 1:30, 3:30, 5:30, 7:35

HELLBOY 2 THE GOLDEN ARMY (14A)
Thu, July 31: 9:45

STEP BROTHERS (14A, coarse language, crude content, not recommended for children)
No passes Thu, July 31: 1:00, 3:00, 5:00, 7:00, 9:00

DUGGAN CINEMA-CAMROSE

1420 1st Ave. 472-2234

THE DARK KNIGHT (PG, violence, frightening scenes, not recommended for young children)
Daily 7:30; Sat-Tue, Thu 1:45

STEP BROTHERS (14A, coarse language, crude content, not recommended for children)
Daily 7:15, 9:15; Sat-Tue, Thu 2:15

MAMMA MIA! (PG)
Daily 7:05, 9:15; Sat-Tue, Thu 2:05

THE MUMMY: TOMB OF THE DRAGON EMPEROR (PG, violence, frightening scenes)
Daily 7:00, 9:10; Sat-Tue, Thu 2:00

SPACE CHIMPS (G)
Sat-Tue, Thu 2:10

X-FILES: I WANT TO BELIEVE (14A, violence)
Daily 7:10, 9:20

LEDUC CINEMAS

780-352-3922

X-FILES: I WANT TO BELIEVE (14A, violence)
Daily 7:00, 9:30

SPACE CHIMPS (G)
Daily 1:00, 3:30

THE MUMMY: TOMB OF THE DRAGON EMPEROR (PG, violence, frightening scenes)
Daily 1:05, 3:25, 7:05, 9:25

STEP BROTHERS (14A, coarse language, crude content, not recommended for children)
Daily 12:55, 3:20, 6:55, 9:20

THE DARK KNIGHT (PG, violence, frightening scenes, not recommended for young children)
Daily 12:40, 3:40, 6:40, 9:45

METRO CINEMA

1420 1st Ave. 472-2234

THE MUMMY: TOMB OF THE DRAGON EMPEROR (PG, violence, frightening scenes)
Daily 12:15, 1:00, 3:10, 4:10, 6:20, 7:20, 9:30

CLAREVIEW 10

1420 1st Ave. 472-2234

THE MUMMY: TOMB OF THE DRAGON EMPEROR (PG, violence, frightening scenes)
Daily 12:15, 1:00, 3:10, 4:10, 6:20, 7:20, 9:30

PARKLAND CINEMA 7

130 Century Crossing, Spruce Grove, 972-2332, Serving Spruce Grove, Stony Plain, Edmonton, Canada

THE MUMMY: TOMB OF THE DRAGON EMPEROR (PG, violence, frightening scenes)
Daily 7:10, 9:30; Sat-Tue, Thu 1:00, 3:25, Movies For Mommies: Tue 1:00

SPACE CHIMPS

Salient Green

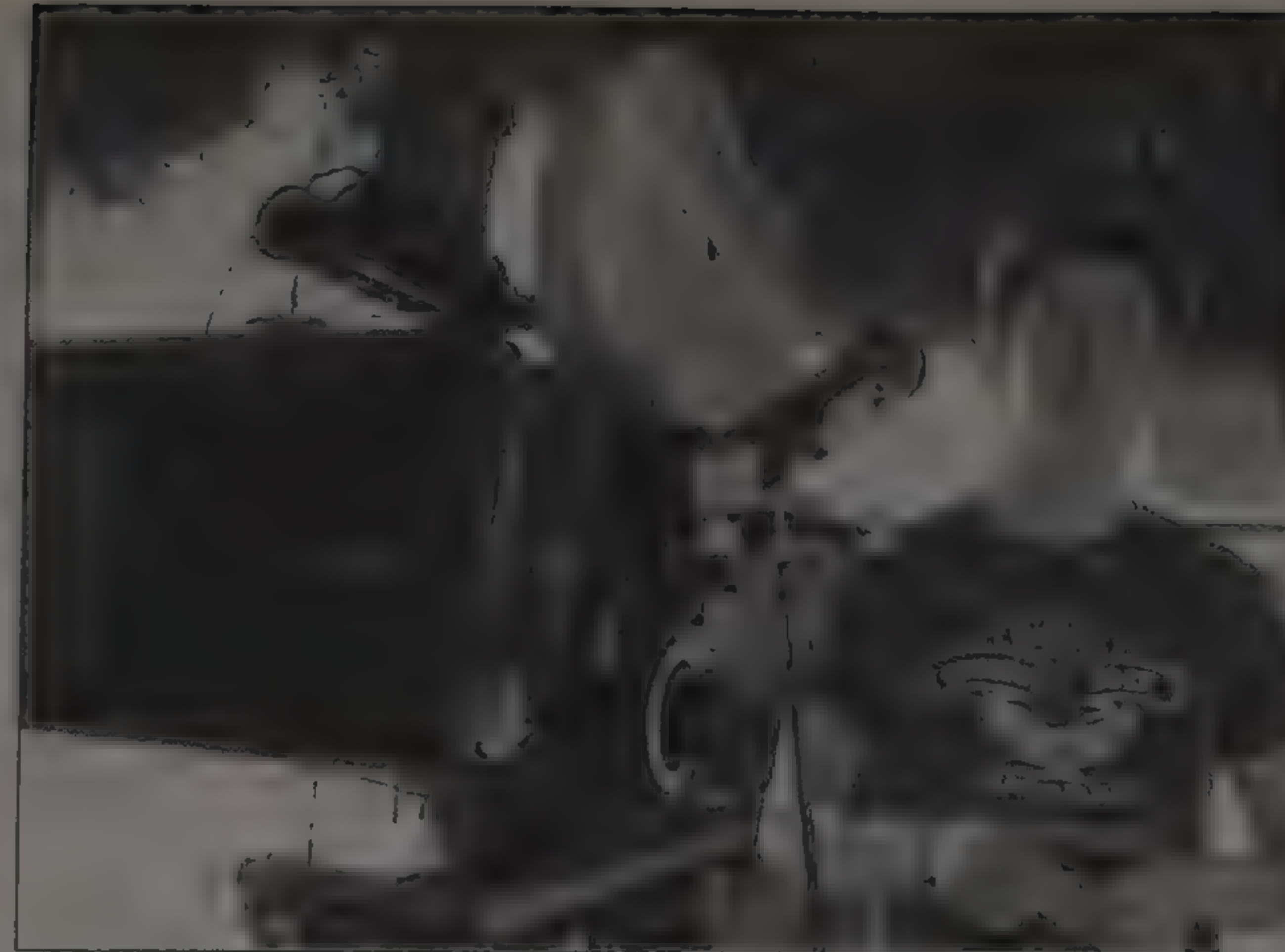
With *Pineapple Express*, can the outsider auteur find mainstream success?

JOSEF BRAUN / josef@vuwweekly.com

If the conditions that were once sufficiently malleable for visionary American independents to thrive have all but vanished, does that make David Gordon Green our last hope? Having released five features in the last eight years, the skinny kid from Little Rock has proven more productive than Wes Anderson—who has stars, scope, narrative cohesion, pop sensibility and, well, Disney, on his side—and is now inching up on Richard Linklater, who's benefited from a one-for-me, one-for-them strategy with regards to balancing personal and more commercial proj-

ects. And it now seems that Green is tearing a page from Linklater's book, with *Pineapple Express*, the latest from the house of *Superbad* mastermind Judd Apatow, storming into theatres next week.

The question looming over *Pineapple Express* is whether or not Green's distinctive sensibility can be reconciled with what promises to be a rousing "stoner action comedy." It's a sensibility that announces itself even in Green's student films, especially "Physical Pinball" (1998), in which Penelope (Candace Evanofski) looks to her widower father (Eddie Rouse) for guidance after getting her first



FOCUS DAVID GORDON GREEN

period. With its abundant tenderness, attention to atmosphere and playful use of Southern jive vernacular, the film feels like some miraculously inspired ABC Afterschool Special directed by Charles Burnett, with Evanofski and Rouse so authentic it feels as though they simply rose up from the rural North Carolina earth like a heat shimmer.

When we next see them, in Green's feature debut *George Washington* (2000), that sense of milieu expands, unfurls and breathes deep. The film's both meditative and rife with humour and warmth, drifting through the multiracial community of kids and adults who work and play, more or less harmoniously, within the intermingling scrap yards, fecund woods and train tracks. Evanofski's Nasia, 13, spends the first scene breaking up with Buddy (Curtis Colton), 12, because he's too immature. "Did you think we were going to be together forever?" she asks. Green envelops the scene with stillness, and not a hint of condescension. Rouse's Damascus is likewise immensely present before Green's gaze, even while giving a trembling monologue worthy of an inaugural AA meeting about getting humped by a dog.

The sounds of labour echo, while a watery piano refrain permeates. A

kid in a lizard mask delivers a soliloquy to an auditorium reclaimed by weeds. People ride motorbikes, and hug. A man and a boy stand around discussing the boy's sick mom and the colour of healthy pee, and crucially, the camera, as coaxed by Green and his marvelous cinematographer Tim Orr, never breaks away or gets in tight, just letting the scene play out through body language. This is one of my favourite movies of our young century.

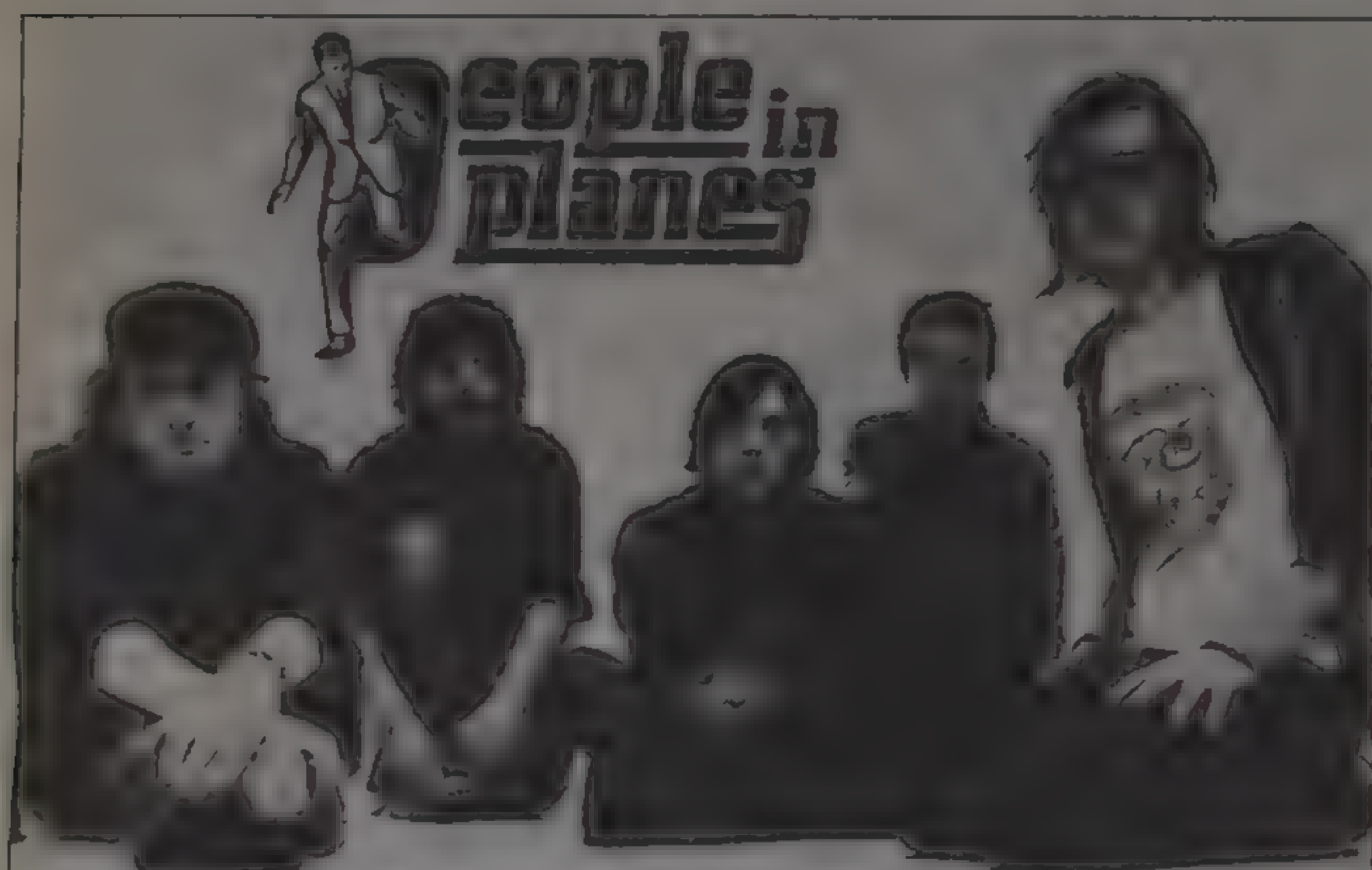
THOUGH STILL GORGEOUS, even startlingly sweet, *All the Real Girls* ('03), Green's love story, begins revealing limitations. The kids are suddenly adults. An air of youth growing up and going nowhere blankets the landscape as palpably as Green and Orr's permanent magic hour, which kisses everything with honey, rust and autumnal glow. The particular sadness of this world is best embodied in Tip (Shea Wingham), whose nickname likely stems from his pompadour, a vestige of teen rebellion,

while he sports that most telling accoutrement of resignation and despair: the fannypack.

The story focuses on local pussyhound Paul (co-writer Paul Schneider) and Noel (Zooey Deschanel), both from private school and a sort of beguiling alien in this place. Their romance is meant to give a love sweep, yet somehow the film feels more alive when listening in on diner conversation. The scene where Paul and Noel's initial bliss is broken does indeed achieve moments of aching emotional truth, but the getting there feels like drama class improv. Schneider really acting hard, while the ever-hushed musical score is so soothingly beautiful that it drains the urgency.

Underdog (2001) was a similar effort, something more marketable while reacquainting Green with his best collaborators: children. As a thriller, this "Deliverance, with kids" is unsurprisingly wobbly, with its deranged uncle on the heels of runaway nephews motor never reaching for a throttle. But as homage to *Night of the Hunter* (1955) and an opportunity to soak up more Southern reverie, like watching a tyke eat paint, it works surprisingly well. More problematic is *Snow Angels* ('07), a tale of divorced parents that has yet to open. It starts wonderfully before sinking into a sort of hysterical murk as the story—from Stuart O'Nan's novel—settles into the deep, deep darkness that lies at its heart.

Being a comedy populated with capable talent—Seth Rogen, Ben Stiller, Franco—it seems perfectly likely that *Pineapple Express* may be just the bridge the still-green Green needs to imbue his adult characters with the same nuance he brings to kids. And it is surely a well-structured script should also offer Green the sort of challenge he needs, one that asks him to use atmosphere as a means rather than an end. In any event, there's every reason to look forward to the marriage of outsider art and multiple chops. God knows we need something to actually pull their increasingly divided audiences together. ▀



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Listen locally

Punks put faith in the DIY approach of Edmonton's Unrest Records

BRYAN BIRTLES / bryan@vuwweekly.com

When punk rock was a dangerous youth movement that was poisoning the minds of teenagers across America and England, bringing them in league with Satan and generally making a social mess, the mainstream wouldn't touch the stuff. Newspapers didn't really want to write about the new music, the radio wouldn't play it and record companies certainly weren't crazy enough to put this noisy shit out, so the Do-It-Yourself ethic of punk rock became a necessity, because if you didn't do it yourself, well, no one would.

Now that the mainstream has co-opted punk—the Warped Tour plays to tens of thousands, MuchLoud plays “punk” videos, and bullet belts sell at a tidy profit—you might think that the DIY spirit would simply die out. But, like the zombies that provide punks with so much of their imagery, underground punk rock just won't go away. There are a significant number of people who see the mainstreaming of punk to be anathema to the original spirit of the movement and who work hard to keep pushing music that remains outside the purview of the mainstream.

One of those people is Mike Safage,

PREVIEW

SUN, AUG 3 (6 PM) & MON, AUG 4 (5 PM)

UNREST FEST

FEATURING ANTI-NOWHERE LEAGUE, DEFIANCE, THE ACCUSED, GBH, WEDNESDAY NIGHT HERDES, MYRACHITE, FIBROSIS AND MORE!
NEW CITY, \$25 (PER DAY)

who started local label Unrest Records in 2004. Growing out of his shop, Octopus Ink, which screens T-shirts and creates other merchandise for bands, the label seemed like a logical extension. Since the shop had so many bands coming through already, why not put out some of their records and help increase the exposure of real punk rock to the world?

“The main focus of the label was to promote our bands worldwide because most of the underground punk and metal labels are out of the United States, Europe, Japan, etc and Canadian bands don't get as much exposure as we'd like them to,” explains Safage. “We thought it would be a good idea to take some of the small indie names out there, along with some of the older renowned bands and put a Canadian label on the map.”

ALMOST IMMEDIATELY, the label was able to sign some well-known bands

and grow its reputation. They did it by being an honest and respectful label that became known for treating its bands well.

“It's basically the old saying—if you build it they will come. Most of the bands on our label are just cronies within our circle of friends and logically, most people would rather work with people they know, rather than a complete stranger that may or may not live up to the royalty end of the deal or may or may not put them on tour,” says Safage. “It's kind of a crap shoot unless you know who you're dealing with.”

Unrest's trustworthiness and personal connections came into play when Seattle punk legends the Accused was looking to re-issue some of its old material that was going for hundreds of dollars on eBay, which the band thought was a little unfair to its fans. As guitarist Tommy Niemeyer explains, the band barely considered any other options when it came to its re-issues.

“I've known those guys at the label for quite awhile, we go way back. They've always been fans of the band—coming to shows a lot back in the day, partying with us and shit,” he says. “So, when the Accused were ready to do some re-issues and put out some cool vinyl shit, we just happened to know of a very open-minded, supportive label run by people we know and can actually trust to get it done correctly.”

Once the label was running smooth-

ly, a step up in promotional efforts was needed. To that end, Unrest Records presented the first **Unrest Fest** last year, which didn't quite go as well as they had hoped due to some border problems. Organizers learned their lessons, however, and this year the work permits and visas for out-of-country bands were acquired far in advance, with the help of Terry England, New City's general manager. All this hard work hasn't left a lot of time for Safage to take care of himself, however.

“I've basically done it all on my own along with Terry at New City, who helped get these bands their work permits and proper visas to come play our festival. It's been a lot of emails, phone calls, faxes, T-shirt printing, posters, laminates and handbills. With the exception of the laminates and posters, everything is done out of our office here at Octopus Ink,” he says from his shop. “It's been pretty overwhelming and I haven't had much time to do anything else—including brush my teeth.”

POOR HYGIENE ASIDE—and really, what's more punk than that?—Unrest Fest is shaping up to be a legendary two-night stand. It's not every weekend that Edmonton sees the likes of GBH, the Accused, Anti-Nowhere League and Defiance roll through. And with the festival happening at night, in the city's best-known punk club instead of in the middle of the day in some field, it should be a lot different than some of the other festivals that roll through or near our

town at this time of year. For Mike Arrogant of Portland's Defiance, that difference sounds perfect

“Stuff like the Warped Tour never really interested us to play to tons of people who are there for a couple of top-40 bands, and they see the other stuff and whatever, but playing at noon in the sun, it's not very rock 'n' roll,” he says. “I'd rather that people that came to see us came to see us because they like our music, not because they're there to see Good Charlotte.”

Ultimately, explains Mike Safage, this isn't about the Warped Tour. It's about the label doing its own thing and trying to get more people to listen to the music that Unrest is putting out, because those involved believe in the bands it supports. It's about getting back to the DIY spirit that made punk in the first place

“[This music] has kind of been a well kept secret but we're trying to make it as open as possible. We don't get as much exposure as we'd like because this isn't the kind of music that pops up in HMV and stores like that. So, it's great that we're starting to get the positive exposure that we need, and having this festival makes people become more aware of Unrest Records,” he says. “Warped Tour is kind of cliché for mainstream bands. We're kind of just trying to do a big festival of our own to pump up our label. It's definitely not going to blow up as big as the Warped Tour—I mean, unless things really begin to change. You never know!”

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SHOW AT 8:30PM

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ITALIAN EDITION
SICK CITY
MORTY'S SNOWBOOTS
THE TRANSITION

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SHOW AT 9:30PM

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NIGHT STALKERS
LOS CREWATORS
CHISWOLF

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\$10.00 AFTER 10:00PM
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VANCOUVER CAMBROSE
Party: Ridley Bent, Joe Nichols, Tim
Baker, DJ Degree, DJ Junior Brown

BLUES ON WHYTE Liz Menderville
CHRISTOPHER'S PARTY PUB
stage hosted by Alberta Grude, 6-11pm

DUMPS BAR AND GRILL
Patio local singer songwriters every
Thu night, Kat Danser, 7-9pm, no
cover

DESTER'S PUB
stage hosted by the Mary Thomas
Band, 9pm

FOUR ROOMS
KARAOKE SINGERS
(Sarah McLachlan's guitar, rock)
Hammers, 8pm-12am, \$10

HILBERT'S
certs: Anne Loree, 8pm, \$12 (no
cover, \$5 tip)

IRISH CLUB
cover, 8pm

JAM N' SHAM AND GRILL
stage with the Poster Boys
(pop/rock/blues) 8:30pm-12:30am

JULIAN'S PIANO BAR-CHATEAU
LOUIS Graham Lawrence (piano jazz)
8pm

LIVE PORN BAR AND GRILL
Stage Thursdays with Gary Thomas
8pm

NEW CITY
Murder, Mutiny and the Zebra, no
cover

NORTH GLENORA HALL Jam by
Sally Taylor, 8pm

PHISH
with Jonny Mac, 9pm-1am, no cover

RAVEN CLUB
loop/tunk, 10pm, \$5

REBELS
Entertainment

BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE Big Rock
Thursdays: DJs spin on two levels

BLUES ON WHYTE
with Mia Fellow, midnight, DJ
\$10 (no cover)

ELITE MCRASTY'S
Bingo with DJ S.W.A.G.

FUNKY BUDDHA (WHYTE AVE)
Requests with DJ Damian

GAS PUMP
40/dance with DJ Christian

STATIONERY
Thursdays

NEW CITY
Bingo hosted by Dexter
Nebula and Anarchy Adam, no
minors, 10pm, no cover

ON THE ROCKS
Thursdays: Dance lessons at 8pm,
Savannah, 10pm

ROCK FIVE BROTHERS AND LAY
KARAOKE SINGERS
(Sarah McLachlan's guitar, rock)
Hammers, 8pm-12am, \$10

PLANET INDIGO ST. ALBERT
Thursdays: breaks, electro house spun
by DJ Christian

REBELS
with org666

REBEL UNDERGROUND DJ
Degree and DJ Genec

REBELS
with org666

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LOUIS Graham Lawrence (piano jazz),
8pm

NEW CITY
DJ Degree, no minors, donation

O'BRYEN'S Stu Bendall

ON THE ROCKS
Thursdays: Dance lessons at 8pm,
Savannah, 10pm

PAWN SHOP
Edmon, Degree, Soul-D Out DJs,
Oaphutire, Tart, The Hues \$10

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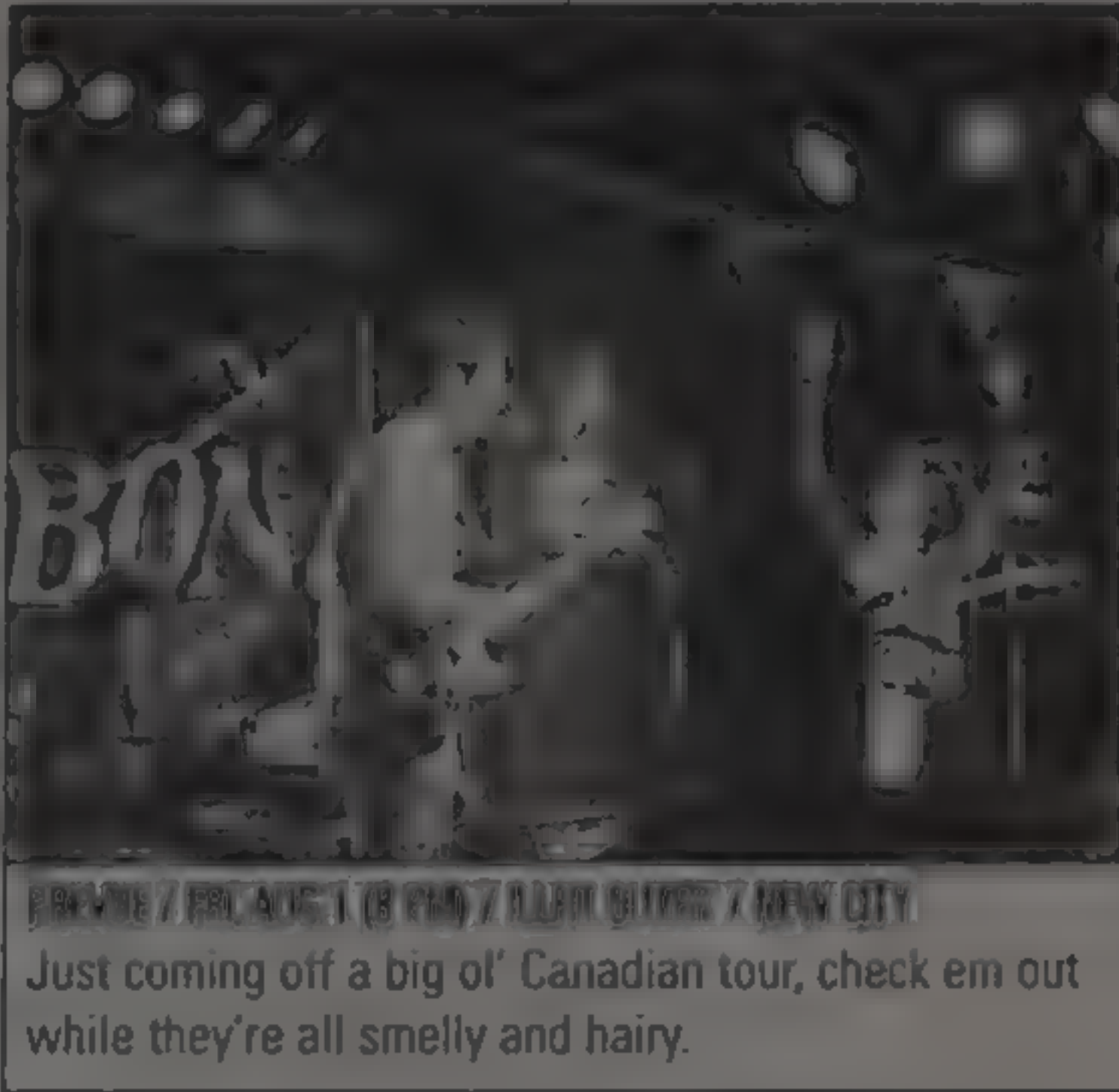
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Just coming off a big ol' Canadian tour, check em out while they're all smelly and hairy.

FRI LIVE MUSIC

ATLANTIC TRAP AND GILL Duff
Reborn

BIG VALLEY
VANCOUVER CAMBROSE
Party: Ridley Bent, Joe Nichols, Tim
Baker, DJ Degree, DJ Junior Brown

BLUES ON WHYTE Liz Menderville
CHRISTOPHER'S PARTY PUB
stage hosted by Alberta Grude, 6-11pm

DUMPS BAR AND GRILL
Patio local singer songwriters every
Fri night, Kat Danser, 7-9pm, no
cover

DESTER'S PUB
stage hosted by the Mary Thomas
Band, 9pm

FOUR ROOMS
KARAOKE SINGERS
(Sarah McLachlan's guitar, rock)
Hammers, 8pm-12am, \$10

HILBERT'S
certs: Anne Loree, 8pm, \$12 (no
cover, \$5 tip)

IRISH CLUB
cover, 8pm

JAM N' SHAM AND GRILL
stage with the Poster Boys
(pop/rock/blues) 8:30pm-12:30am

JULIAN'S PIANO BAR-CHATEAU
LOUIS Graham Lawrence (piano jazz)
8pm

LIVE PORN BAR AND GRILL
Stage Fridays with Gary Thomas
8pm

NEW CITY
Murder, Mutiny and the Zebra, no
cover

NORTH GLENORA HALL Jam by
Sally Taylor, 8pm

PHISH
with Jonny Mac, 9pm-1am, no cover

TOUCH OF CLASS-CHATEAU
LOUIS Christine Home (pop/rock)
8:30pm

URBAN LOUNGE
Blue with Audio Rocketry, Feast or
Famine, guests, \$10 (door)

WILD WEST SALOON
Eclectic jams with Nevine-indie, soul,
9pm-1am

WINDMILL
Eclectic jams with Nevine-indie, soul,
9pm-1am

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9pm-1am

SAT LIVE MUSIC

ATLANTIC TRAP AND GILL Duff
Reborn

BIG VALLEY
VANCOUVER CAMBROSE
Party: Ridley Bent, Joe Nichols, Tim
Baker, DJ Degree, DJ Junior Brown

BLUES ON WHYTE Liz Menderville
CHRISTOPHER'S PARTY PUB
stage hosted by Alberta Grude, 6-11pm

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Eclectic jams with Nevine-indie, soul,
9pm-1am

29

CENTURY CASINO

CHECK OUT THESE UPCOMING SHOWS!

AUG 17

\$33⁰⁰/\$49⁰⁰
TICKETS NOW ON SALE.
RESERVED SEATING!

GARRY THE PIGEONHOLKERS

AUG 23

\$33⁰⁰/\$49⁰⁰
TICKETS NOW ON SALE.
RESERVED SEATING!

MICKEY DOLENZ OF THE MONKEES

SEP 06

TICKETS ON SALE SOON

HARLEQUIN

OCT 17

TICKETS ON SALE SOON

GARY LEWIS AND THE PLAYBOYS

OCT 25

TICKETS ON SALE SOON

CHILLWACK

OCT 26

\$33⁰⁰/\$49⁰⁰
AVAILABLE AT TICKETMASTER
403-690-8800 AND CENTURY CASINO

JAY AND AMERICANA

TICKETS AVAILABLE AT CENTURY CASINO

ALL SHOWS DOORS AT 7PM

13103 FORT RD 643.4000



SAT. JUL 26 / SUPERSUCKERS / STARLITE ROOM

The Supersuckers brought the "Evil Powers of Rock 'n' Roll" to the Starlite Room last Saturday and it was a spectacle to behold. Tons of cool cats and hot kittens were there to cheer Eddie Spaghetti and his crew or to even greater heights of rock excess and there was much rejoicing. Beer was spilled, bottles were smashed, eardrums were pushed to the limit and in the end a bunch of sweaty fans got to hug the ever-sweatier band in a demented wedding line procession. Proving once again—despite everything else going on in River City—Edmonton still knows how to RAWK. —PHIL DUPERRON / phil@vuweekly.com

REAR ADMIRAL SAUNDERS Woodtop DJ
12pm

BILLY'S STRONGHOLD
Electro latest and greatest in House, Progressive and Trip-Hop; 12am-2:30am; interested guest DJs inquire at kelly@michetti.com; karaoke with Tizzy, amateur strip contest; 9pm-12am

FLTHY McNASTY'S Metal Mondays; with DJ S W A G

FLTHY LOUNGE Metal Mondays

NEW CITY LOUNGE Munch on Metal Mondays: '80s metal with DJ Sammi Kerr; no cover

FRANK LOUNGE Open mic stage with Chris Wynters

MYTHS Shannon Johnson and friends

ROCK AND ROLL Open Stage every Tues night with Mark Ammar; 8:30-1am, no cover

SECOND CUP Open mic every Tue 7-9pm

TAPHOUSE Molson Open Stage Jam with Simon Bennett; 8pm-midnight

DJs

BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE Main Floor: CJSR's Eddie Lunchpail, Woodtop: Dub at The Dog with DJ Degree

BUDDY'S Free pool and tourney, DJ Arrowchaser; 9pm

ESMERALDA'S Retro every Tue; no cover with student ID

FLTHY BILLY'S Latin and Salsa music, dance lessons 8-10pm

GINGUR SKY Bashment Tuesdays

RED STAR Tuesdays: Experimental Indie Rock, Hip Hop, Electro with DJ

Hot Philly

SAPPY RESTAURANT AND LOUNGE Tapas Tuesday popular house beats with DJ Kevin Wong

SPORTSWORLD INUNE AND AND SKATING 40 request with a mix of retro and disco; 7pm-12 midnight

WED LIVE MUSIC

BEES ON WHYTE (40th Anniversary)

FESTIVAL PLACE Kitchen Patio Series: John Renschman and The Jaybirds; Hungry Hill; 7:30pm, \$5

JOVEN SPECIAL CLUB with Ido Vanderlaan and friends every Wed; 7:30pm

MOULSAZ PUB Open stage Wednesdays hosted by Rock 'n' Roll

LEVEL 2 LOUNGE Open mic

BYRON'S

PLEASANTVIEW COMMUNITY HALL Acoustic Bluegrass jam presented by the Northern Bluegrass Circle Music Society every Wednesday evening

ROCK PUB AND GRILL unplugged jam; 9pm-1am; no cover

STEEPS TEA LOUNGE Open mic (acoustic) every Wed

WILD WEST SALOON

DJs

BACKROOM Wednesdays: Soulful Deep House with Nic-E and Smoov

FRANK LOUNGE Nights with DJ Harley

BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE Floor: Glitter Gulch Wednesdays

ROCK PUB AND GRILL cover, roots music every Wednesday with DJ Buster Friendly. Live music once a month; Woodtop: RetroActive Radio: alternative '80s/'90s, post punk, new wave, garage, Brit, mod, rock 'n' Roll with DJ Cool Joe

FOXY

FLTHY LOUNGE

FOX Wind-up Wednesday

LEGENDS PUB Hip

NEW CITY LOUNGE AJ/DJ Wednesday; no minors

NIKO DIAMOND'S

RED STAR

STARLITE ROOM

STOLLS

WONDERBAR

Y&A

The ghosts on the machine

MUSIC BACKLASH BLUES

ROLAND PEMBERTON
roland@vuweekly.com

An interesting social experiment took place at the Starlite Room this past Thursday: how will people react to a band playing live dance music that isn't as well-known by the audience compared to a group of regionally popular producers DJing hits of their own and others? The stimulus (electro house) is the same, but the distribution method was different, and that's what made this show with Booka Shade and MSTRKRFT so interesting.

Edmonton's electro kids were plied into paying up to \$40 for an admittedly top-ranking pair of groups—Booka Shade had arguably one of the biggest international club hits of recent years with "Body Language," a collaboration with MANDY, and MSTRKRFT is the reigning Canadian king of electro, producing huge remixes and a maximal sound that has the duo dominating stages worldwide.

Finding out that Booka Shade produced Aqua's "Barbie Girl" is suddenly unsurprising when you see the duo live. The members' personalities were very present, talking to the crowd, hyping them up, counting them in, all with a charmingly goofy German turn of phrase. You see them having fun with their toys and it makes you want to work with them towards the same positive goal of a good party. Not to say their chops weren't there: with one man on V-drums and the other rocking a Bobby Brown headset vocoder and a fleet of keyboards, the stage was turned into a feel-good space station, bombing out minimalist electro across different emotional ranges.

MSTRKRFT, on the other hand, seems to only have one mode: overdrive. With each successive track the duo spun, it seemed like they were trying to push it further and further through the roof, which is one of the tenets of modern DJing, sure. But not with this hamfisted, IV-full-of-Red-Bull, riding-a-skateboard-with-nitrous-oxide-boost-across-the-Grand-Canyon-style of

DURR DURR DURR that never ceased for the two-hour set. Playing mainly fidge house and fuzzy electro, it's interesting to note that people reacted the most to the MSTRKRFT songs played (including the Noreaga-featuring banger, "Bounce"), like they were watching a band doing a set of their favourites.

In reality, much of MSTRKRFT's set was made up of songs in exactly the same tonal range as the duo's own compositions, so I don't know why anyone would be any more or less excited for something they recognized in this case. The group's personality was apparent, even though the members didn't speak (but how many DJs talk these days anyway?). Flanked by two Heineken pillars, with girls and guys alike jumping on stage to try and become the star for a few seconds, it seemed people were reacting to the vibe that was being put out to them. MSTRKRFT trades on a brand of self-perceived cool that appeals to people interested in being cool (whatever that entails). The duo's stage presence implied disinterest in both the crowd and the music it was playing. ✓

THIS SATURDAY - EARLY SHOW

TerroR

WITH GUESTS

WARRIORS • DEATH BEFORE DISHONOR
COC • TRAPPED UNDER ICE

SATURDAY AUGUST 2 • STARLITE ROOM

EARLY SHOW - DOORS 5 PM - ALL AGES

TIX ALSO AT MEGATUNES, BLACKBYRD, FS (WEM) & FREECLOUD

VUE

JUST ANNOUNCED - TICKETS ON SALE FRIDAY

exclaim! .co

BARONESS

GENGHIS TRON | BISON B.C.

SEPTEMBER 29 • STARLITE ROOM

DOORS 7 PM - ALL AGES • TIX ALSO AT MEGATUNES, BLACKBYRD & FS (WEM)

cjsr

THE MOST EXTREME TOUR OF THE YEAR
SUMMER

AUG 22 • STARLITE ROOM

DOORS 5 PM - DOORS 5:30 PM • 18+ ID REQ'D
TIX ALSO AT MEGATUNES, FS (WEM) & BLACKBYRD

FS

THE OCTOPUS PROJECT

**FRIDAY AUGUST 22
VELVET UNDERGROUND**

DOORS 8 PM - 18+ ID REQ'D
TIX ALSO AT MEGATUNES & BLACKBYRD

cjsr

FinntrolZ

SEPT 4 • STARLITE ROOM

DOORS 8 PM - 18+ ID REQ'D • TIX ALSO AT MEGATUNES, BLACKBYRD, FS (WEM)

cjsr

AUGUST 29 - DINWOODIE LOUNGE

U OF A SUB DOORS 7:00 PM - ALL AGES

TIX ALSO AT MEGATUNES, BLACKBYRD, FS (WEM) & FREECLOUD

cjsr

ANTI-FLAG

**SEPTEMBER 3
STARLITE ROOM**

DOORS 8 PM - ALL AGES
TIX ALSO AT MEGATUNES, BLACKBYRD, FS (WEM) & FREECLOUD

VUE

FS

RANCID

WITH GUESTS

DOA AND
Wrecked
Night
Heroes

**SEPTEMBER 8
SHAW CONFERENCE CENTRE**

DOORS 7 PM - ALL AGES
TIX ALSO AT MEGATUNES, BLACKBYRD, FS (WEM), FREECLOUD

BONE
JOEY
BROOKLYN

ALSO AVAILABLE ON ticketmaster.ca 780-451-8000

What a long Tacoy Ryde it's been

CAROLYN NIKOBYM / carolyn@vuweekly.com

A 20-minute interview is woefully short for a band that's 40 years old. It's only 30 seconds per year.

It's too short to truly understand a band that has seen electric Kool-Aid parties at the U of A, that has seen the rise and fall of six-night bar gigs and that has never had a major record deal (a bigger hurdle once upon a time). It's also too short to appreciate a band that, after sprouting out of Stettler in late '60s, has maintained a steady pace of rehearsals and songwriting.

Of course, the composition of Edmonton's **Tacoy Ryde** has changed a little over the years, but certainly no more than many bands a quarter the age. For the most part, as keyboardist Dennis Meneely says, the band has been a long-standing love affair for its six current members.

"The band has never really cared about commercial success; that's never been the focal point of the band," Meneely explains. "It's just becoming the best musicians that we can possibly be at any given moment in time is what we've always strived for. I've been with the band because everybody gives 200 per cent every time we play. Nobody takes a night off—ever."

FOUNDING MEMBERS Barrie Nighswander and Duane Smith join Meneely for the interview, all sounding surprisingly spry the day after their first 40th anniversary gig in Buffalo Lake (Rochon Provincial Park). Something of a homecoming for the band, the gig saw friends and fans travel from as far as Ontario to join in on the party.

The guys, who along with Al Brant, Bill Hobson and Dale Ladouceur, form the band, never say explicitly what the key to the band's longevity is, but



PREVIEW
MON, AUG 4 - SAT, AUG 9
TACOY RYDE
BLUES ON WHYTE

they do offer up clues, each in his own way. Part of the answer lies in the idea of keeping a touch on reality, especially in the early years.

"We've never been the typical sex, drugs and rock 'n' roll rock band," Smith says. "We've always been fairly sensible."

"Fairly," Nighswander adds.

They all laugh.

"There are exceptions," Smith says.

"We've delved ..." Nighswander adds.

"If we had extremely wild personalities like that," Smith concludes, "I'm sure we wouldn't have lasted very long at all."

ANOTHER MAJOR PART of the answer is that the band has always played exactly what it has wanted to. Back in the early days, bars were not the preferred venue. Bar owners would want to see a band's setlist to make sure it was going to play Top-40 cov-

ers. This is not a groove that Tacoy Ryde has ever needed to explore.

"I don't think we've been following any pattern as far as popular music is concerned. It's kind of whatever we go into as individuals," Nighswander adds. "All of our influences show up in our songs. I really love Latin music, so some Latin influences come in with my writing. Some of the guys really love blues and jazz and whatever it is—we don't really have a particular sound or writing style, it's a combination of a lot of things."

Certainly, there is no genre that Tacoy Ryde can definitively fit into, especially after all of this time, after flirting with everything from reggae to blues. Perhaps this evolution is what has kept both band and fans interested. Even its 40th anniversary album will not be retrospective, but an album culled from the best of the songs the band continues to pen, and rehearse.

Unfortunately, only beginning the recording process this week, the CD will not be available in time for Tacoy Ryde's gig at Blues on Whyte, but the six-nighter will give fans enough to live on until the album's release later this year. ▽

SAT, AUG 2 (5 PM)

TERROR

WITH THE WARRIORS, CDC, TRAPPED UNDER ICE,

DENTAL REPAIR, DYSMORPHIA

STARLITE ROOM, \$15

DAVID BERRY / david@vuweekly.com

Any hardcore singer worth his guttural growl will have at least a few war wounds from his time spent at the fringes of a mosh pit. But Scott Vogel, hardcore veteran and lead singer of LA's Terror, has an injury list that would make even the toughest of headbangers wince. Spending years on the Buffalo hardcore scene before moving to LA and forming Terror in 2000, Vogel has battered, bruised or broken almost every square inch of his body, from neck to foot.

Not that Vogel is the type to let something as minor as a bone fracture stop him—most of the time.

"I think the worst was in New Zealand. We just got there, first show, and on the side of the stage there was kind of like a shelf, built for people to put their drinks on. A bunch of people pushed me back and my ribs just smashed into it," explains Vogel, the pain of the memory coming through in his voice. "I didn't really think I hurt myself at that point, but the next day I woke up, and I could feel it—when you break your ribs, if you cough or sneeze or

breathe or anything, you can really feel it. There wasn't much I could do, though: if we were in the US, I guess maybe I could have cancelled some shows and taken a week off, but we were in New Zealand, and I didn't just want to go home."

Though cracking his ribs didn't stop him in the land of Kiwis, Vogel has toned down some of his stage antics since slipping some discs in his neck a few years back—the kind of injury that can require surgery, though Vogel was fortunate enough to escape with just a bit of bed rest.

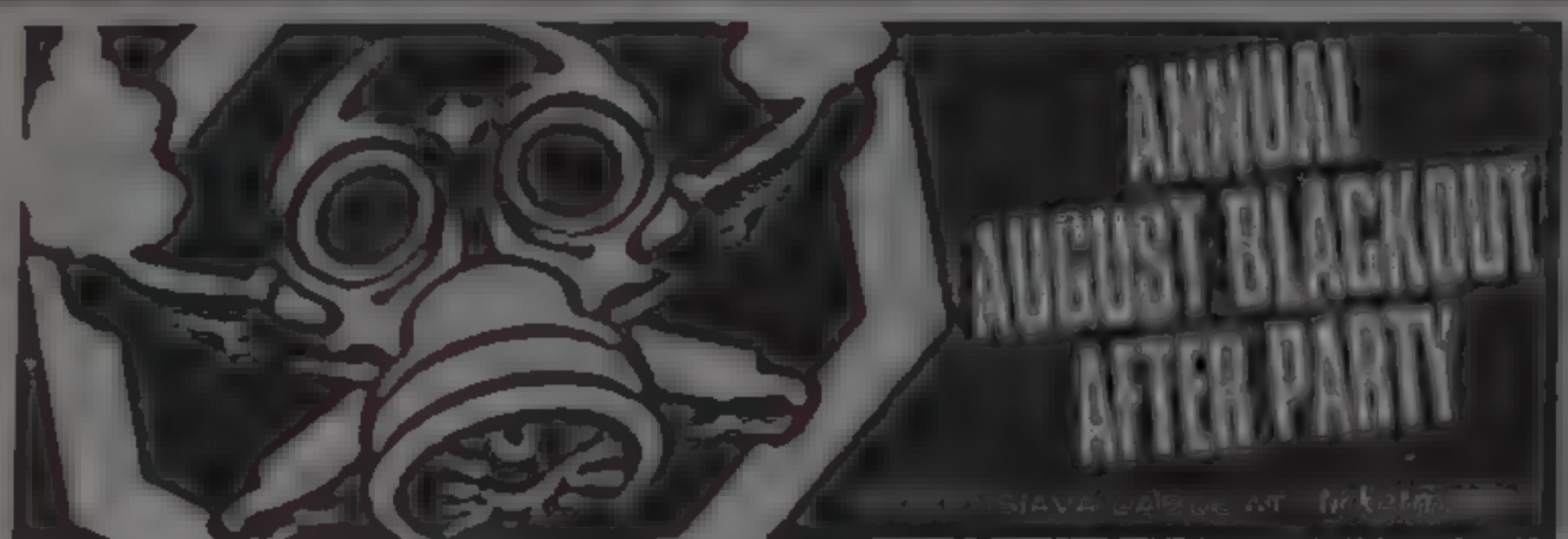
That's not to say a Terror show is by any means a calm affair. Though Vogel may not be literally breaking his neck up on stage, he's a well-known proponent of a punishingly energetic live show. Vogel has a particular affinity for stage diving, and has been known to shout things like "We need to elevate the maximum stagedive potential" (among what we'll call more emphatic slogans) throughout Terror sets, much to the chagrin of bouncers everywhere.

"There is definitely something about it—I've always liked stage diving, but I also think it's a good way to get that kind of energy out," Vogel says of his fetish. "A few years back, we were having a bit of trouble with some aggressive behaviour in our pits, and I think it's just way better to see someone go flying off the stage than having a fight. I'm all for that." ▽

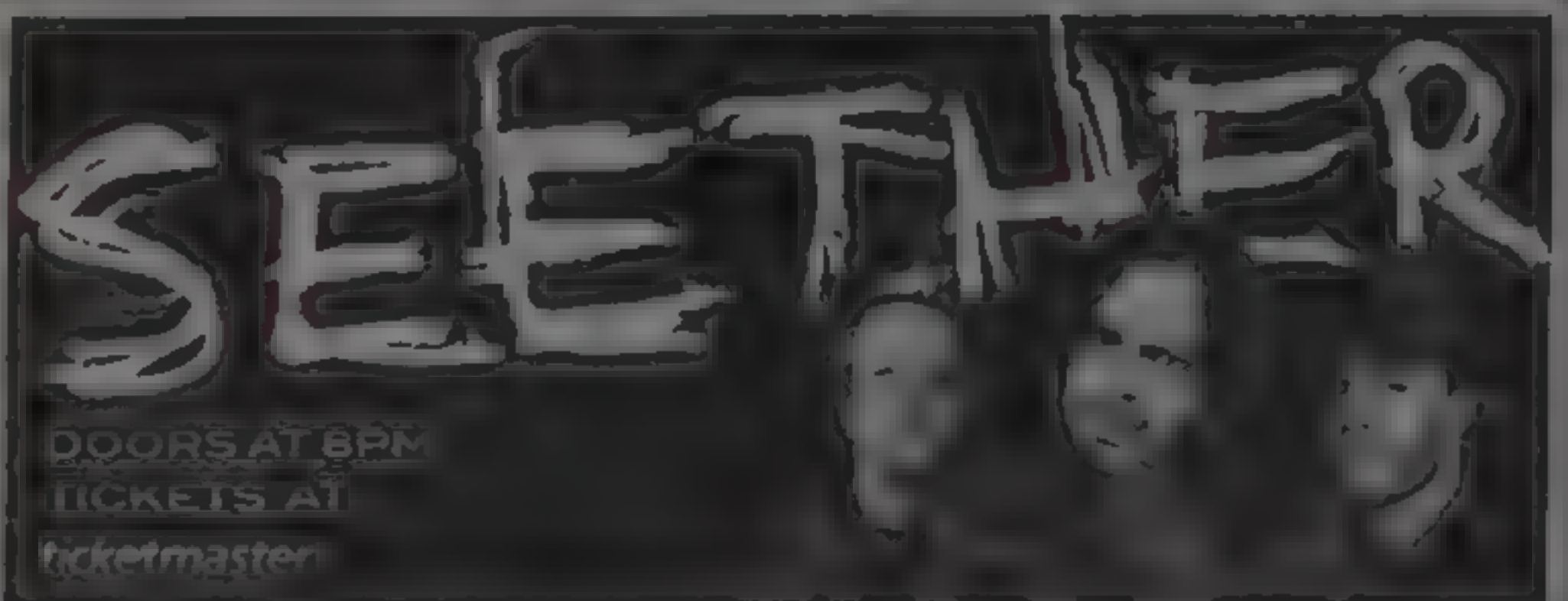
PREVIEW

EDMONTON EVENT CENTRE

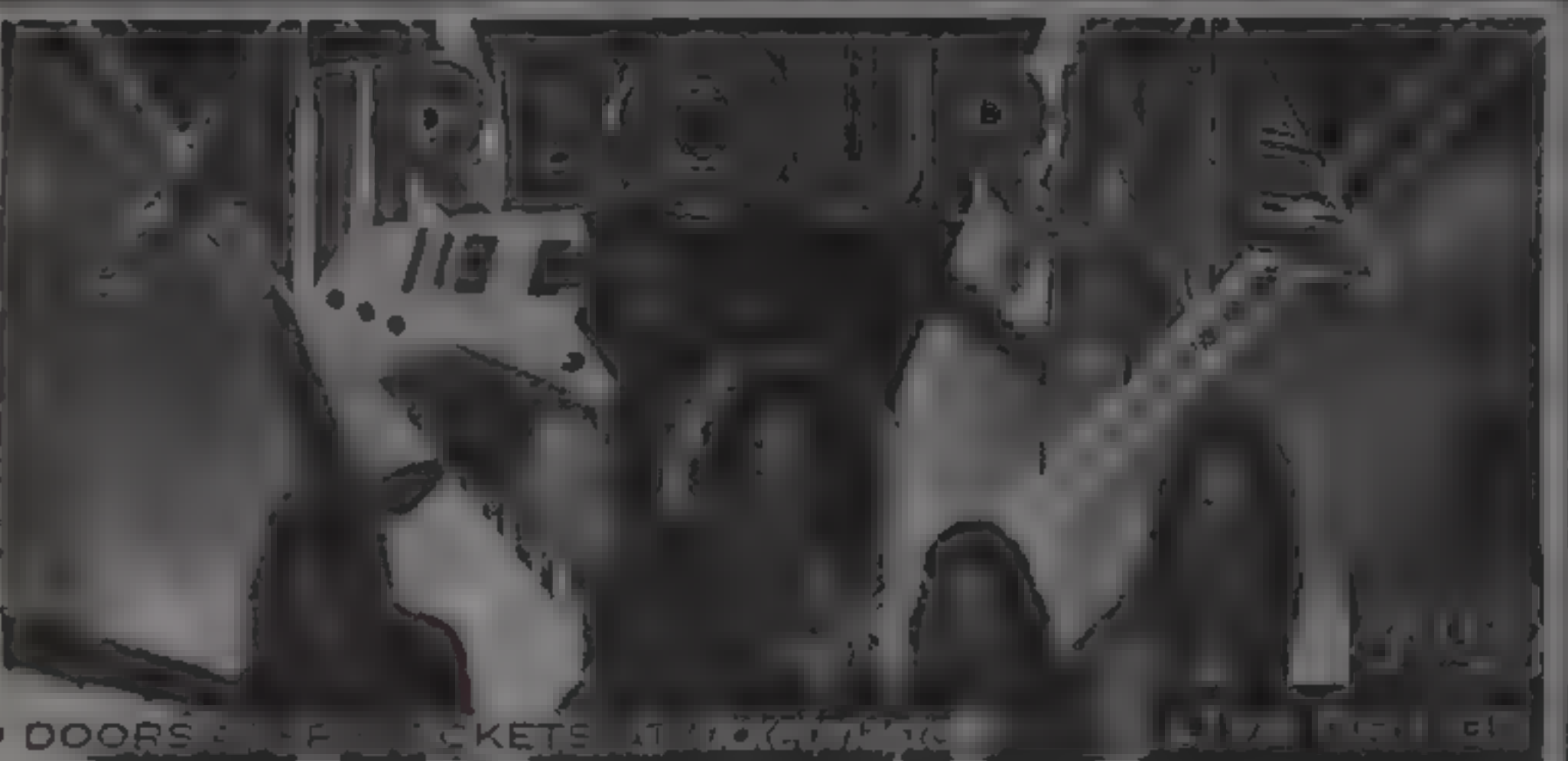
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WED
OCT
01



OCT 4: JOE SATRIANI
OCT 15: GOGOL BORDELLO

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EDMONTONEVENTCENTRE.CA

A quick Transition

by SAUNDERS / bryansounders@vancouverweekly.com
When Kyle Richardson's band fell apart, he didn't waste a second dwelling on the matter. Instead, he immediately rounded up some fellow musicians in a similar situation and put together a new band called *The Transition*.

It's not just admirable—it seems to have paid off. The members of this melodic punk band have only been together for seven months and already they've accomplished more than most bands do in a couple of years. In addition to a cross-Canada tour earlier this year that had them opening shows for the likes of Gob, they've also already written, recorded and released their first EP. They're now embarking on a second tour to promote the new release and, as Richardson explains, the boys of the Transition have no plans of slowing down.

"We're going to be shooting a video actually," Richardson reveals. "We're shooting a video for 'Throw Away,' which is the second track on the album. And then we're going to be booking another tour hopefully on the island, and then hopefully head out again for the fall as quick as we can."

Richardson adds that they're already getting ready to record their first full-length album as well. Meanwhile, I'm still left wondering how a band that was at the time a month old got to open for Gob, and will be per-

PREVIEW

SAT. AUG 2 (8 PM)
THE TRANSITION
WITH ITALIAN EDITION, SICK CITY,
MADONNA'S TRANSMISSIONS
PAWN SHOP

forming with them again in August

"I'm old friends with Tom and Theo—I graduated with them, actually," Richardson explains, casually referring to the founding members of the legendary Canadian band on a first-name basis. "[Tom and I] had, I think, geography class together. We did guitar class together back when we were teenagers.

"So, you know, when they were finishing *Muertos Vivos*, when they finished up that album I was like, 'Hey! You guys need an opener?' And they were like, 'Yeah! Okay!'"

GOB MIGHT BE A pretty well-known name in the world of music, but apparently, the Transition is an even more prominent name. It seems that the members of this Vancouver-based band, in their haste to pick a band name, picked one that's already shared by dozens and dozens of other bands around the world. Richardson doesn't seem too bothered by this though.

"There were a couple of others," he admits. "The Transitions, the Transitioners and a couple of other weird band names that were similar to the Transitions. But there wasn't actually

any band that was doing anything that was big."

Anyway, Richardson points out, the band had toyed around with other names, but besides this one, none of them seemed to work. The name, he remarks, was one everyone agreed on the moment he suggested it.

"Everyone liked the band name the Transition just because of the situation we were in. It was a transition from what we were doing," he explains. "I'm not too concerned. Like I said, if there's a lawyer that comes knocking on our door that wants us to cease-and-desist using that band name, then we will. But until that happens I'm not too worried about it."

In the end, Richardson declares, a band's name should always be secondary to its music, really, and that's what this Transition is focusing on right now.

"There's so many bands out there that you can't not have the same name. It's hard to be original with band names nowadays. You can't really get away from it," Richardson says. He then points out that there are many bands out there, like Blink-182, that have enjoyed remarkable success in spite of similar name-related problems.

"Basically, whatever band gets biggest first [gets to keep the name], I guess," Richardson figures.

And, at the breakneck pace these fellows are doing things at, it might just be them. ▽

JCL BOP & JCL PRESENT: BRENT OLIVER

MIKE PLUME BAND

REUNION TOUR
WED SEPT 3
PAWN SHOP - EDMONTON



THE DUB SELECTOR / THE UPSETTER...
LEE "SCRATCH" PERRY
AND HIS BAND
Plus
BY MICK SLEEPER & SORTRIC (VITALITY SOUND SYSTEM)
& DUB VULTURE
PRESENTED BY KEYSTONE MUSIC • DOORS AT 8PM

WED SEPT 17
AT THE PAWN SHOP
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Quite the character

Songcrafter Aimee Mann brings her people to the Folk Fest

MARY CHRISTA O'KEEFE / marychrista@vancouverweekly.com

Yes, Aimee Mann's a superb musician and songwriter, blessed with a supple cashmere voice. It'd be an indignity to not give full due to the LA-based artist's emotive sonic constructions—golden, lush and forceful—which, ripening over her solo career, have carved out a unique place in the American songbook. But her characters! They wander through her songs, brought to life by astute lyric portraiture, a sharply drawn population of wounds, good intentions, self-deception and wild longing.

With a clear-eyed tenderness, Mann uncompromisingly renders their absorptions and failures into song, especially on her latest album, @#%&*! *Smilers*, released this summer through her SuperEgo label.

"There are certain types of people I always find fascinating," Mann notes. "The songs are primarily based on people I know, with details changed. Even if I sit down with the intention of writing about myself, I wind up changing things. A lot of times a situation, dynamic or scenario that applies to yourself has details translatable in your own life, that have significance in your own history. You have to tweak, change, add or subtract to make the song work. What I always try to do is have an emotional centre to it that's true and accurate."

Her people are often linked by "dreams you should have outgrown. Everybody's like that, I think—the hardest thing about trying to live in a grown-up way is to be aware of what



PREVIEW
THU, AUG 7 (6 PM)
AIMEE MANN
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you are. I think that's a universal thing. It's why women stay in marriages with men who beat them, because they have this dream of how the relationship could be. Giving up the relationship is giving up the dream."

She also portrays wrestling with the release of a different kind of dream, one complicated by physical as much as emotional compulsion. "I

write a lot of songs about addiction. People with all the insight in the world who just can't step away from it," Mann says. "One in particular friend, struggles every day."

Does he recognize himself in her songs?

"We talk about it," she acknowledges. "Mostly he can tell it comes from a place of concern."

Mann laughs wryly, "And maybe he's a little flattered, too."

IT'S A CONTRADICTION truth, universal but perhaps heightened by her environment. "LA has elements that attract creative people and narcissistic people," she states. "The challenge is knowing which is which."

Other LA characters pop up in *Smilers*. "This record has a few instances that were written about obsession with money and status. When I'm in LA, it becomes more crystallized, but it's a particular American thing."

In a city where both the heights and saddest underbelly of the American dream are on display, Mann's faithful the underlying value—a secure independent life for everyone is included.

"I believe in copyright protection. People have a mistaken idea that musicians are rolling in money. It costs a lot to make a record and tour."

Mann cautions, "If you don't buy records of people you listen to, they eventually have to stop making music. The records you're left with will be entirely sponsored by corporations—100 per cent what they want you to hear."

REVIEW
MASTER OF REALITY
BY JOHN DAMIELLE
EDEN MURRO'S JOURNAL SERIES
101 PP, \$10.95

EDEN MURRO / eden@vancouverweekly.com
A hacking cough crackles forth, panning across the speakers, followed by a thunderous, remarkably simplistic riff made of bolted-together power chords. There are no intricately fretted notes here, just the initial duo of pounding chords followed by a pattern that descends, dipping below the beginning notes before rising up once more. That's how Black Sabbath's third album, *Master of Reality*, begins, emerging fully grown into this world alongside vocalist Ozzy Osbourne's single-minded proclamation of love for the "Sweet Leaf."

With the 56th book in Continuum Publishing's 33 1/3 series—each one of those entries delving into the music contained within the grooves of a particular album of note—appropriately titled *Master of Reality*, the Mountain Goats' John Darnielle tackles the eight tracks that make up Sabbath's album. Rather than taking a surgical approach and dissecting the music piece by piece, though, Darnielle fictionalizes his study, coming at the book as though the pages belong to a journal kept

by a 16-year-old boy named Roger Painter, written while he is locked up in the Santa Fe Psychiatric Hospital in 1985.

On the surface, it seems an off-the-wall approach to a discussion of music, but it actually makes a lot of sense—especially when dealing with a Sabbath record. This is a band that stood apart from everyone around it in its sound, made up of outcasts with a penchant for downtuned riffing and lyrics penned with one eye towards the dark underside of this world and the next.

So, while music criticism usually takes a more refined approach, Darnielle's use of an adolescent narrator makes perfect sense here, as he chronicles Roger's efforts to convince the hospital staff to give him back his favourite album, *Master of Reality*.

The effect that Darnielle achieves with his writing is an oscillation between two poles. In the first, the narrator's story takes over and the album itself becomes only one small piece in a sad tale of increasing frustration.

But when Roger's journal entries turn to the specific tracks that together form the record, what becomes apparent is the role of personal perspective in the meanings behind music. Roger describes Sabbath's songs in terms that are immediate to a kid who is scared and angry, and who wants

nothing more than the familiarity of his tapes so that he can stave off the unpleasantness of the shrinking world around him—but those same songs would likely take on completely different meanings for someone in another situation.

It's possible that the book is a little too light for some readers—those looking for a sterile, scholarly deconstruction of the songs, anyway. What is here feels very much like the sort of enthusiastic discussions that most of the people reading this series of books most likely had during their initial explorations into music, and which a good number probably still engage in as they get older.

Despite the rather dark setting that the book's narrator is writing from, there's something especially enjoyable about the loose approach that Darnielle takes with his discussion. There's a real enthusiasm for the record, and while there are few answers to be found here, Darnielle has a way of starting the wheels turning and getting the reader to turn over some stones and figure out just what the music means to them.

It stands to reason that the book will be of most interest to those willing to sit down with this particular album. But there's also something to be said for applying Darnielle's ideas to any of the other albums that means something special.

Look up in the sky

People in Planes lands in New York

KRISTINA DE GUZMAN / kristina@vuwweekly.com
New York may be home to them at the moment, but for the guys in Welsh band **People in Planes**, the stay is only short-term.

"We're just going to be here [in New York] for a year or something," says guitarist Pete Roberts. "We'll base ourselves here for a year and enjoy it."

The move was a matter of convenience more than anything else, as the band's record label, Wind-up Records, is based in New York. While Roberts didn't personally experience any culture shock upon moving to the Big Apple, there are some things about home that he misses.

"All media crosses over here—they've got the same music, TV programs and things like that," he says. "You know *The Office*? That program was like this huge smash hit [in the UK]. It was meant to be this entertainment household name in the hope that it would be a total sweep. Now you've got Steve Carell [in the US version]—and I think he can be quite funny—who's seen the original version and even he was blown away by it. He loved it. I don't mind the American version but it has lost its original charm."

PREVIEW THU, AUG 7 (9 PM)
PEOPLE IN PLANES
WITH GUESTS
PAUL BLIMOV & MAD SHADOW

In 2006, People in Planes garnered much attention with its debut record *As Far As the Eye Can See* with hits like "If You Talk Too Much (My Head Will Explode)" and "Falling by the Wayside." For its follow-up, *Beyond the Horizon*, the band worked with four different producers including Our Lady Peace frontman Raine Maida, Panic at the Disco producer Matt Squire and Doves/Massive Attack producer Matt Austin.

"They were all completely different actually," reveals Roberts regarding all the producers the band worked with. "It kept things exciting."

The one who continues to affect Roberts the most, however, was former Queens of the Stone Age keyboardist and Eleven singer Natasha Schneider, who Roberts had cowritten two tracks with. Tragically, Schneider was diagnosed with cancer and passed away earlier this month, shortly after the band's record was released online.

"She was like a genius," Roberts

fondly recalls. "[Her death] is still breaking me out a bit."

BEYOND THE HORIZON was released via iTunes in June but it won't be until September that it will be sitting on the store shelves. The band hopes to create some more excitement about its new record by going on tour before-hand.

"I don't know what that was about," Roberts admits equally puzzled, thinking that it might have been more logical to have both the store and online releases at the same time.

Like many other musicians, Roberts hopes that the band makes its way to Japan as well as mainland Europe in future travels. Having flown one time too many, however, Roberts confesses that the aerial mode of transportation can be a pain even if he is in a band whose name suggests an enjoyment for flying and travelling.

"[Being on an airplane] is like being in a zombie state. There's the jetlag—you get quite horrible effects," he says. "And with security these days, it feels like you're always being watched. You get a little paranoid. It feels like you have drugs on you even if you don't." ♥

PREVIEW SUN, AUG 10 (10 PM)
MAD SHADOW
WITH GUESTS
PAUL BLIMOV & PEOPLE IN PLANES

PAUL BLIMOV / blimov@vuwweekly.com
At a time when most teenage boys are just trying to be cool, Paul Blimov and his band Mad Shadow are trying to be different. The band with friends and maybe sneak some booze from their parent's liquor cabinet, Danny Sveinson—a real character—has a different kind of adolescent problem.

The 15-year-old guitar-whiz is touring with his rock band Mad Shadow, and is set to play both the Vans Warped tour in September and the *Rock and Roll Kid* tour in the coming weeks. Our prairie province's liquor laws have sharpened considerably since Sveinson last came through town, however, and with stricter rules in place his mostly underage band's usual choice of venues almost dried up completely when looking at an Edmonton stop.

"Back when I was touring with my old band Sonic City, we'd come through Alberta and play Union Hall and Red's," Sveinson says. "We had somewhere to play in Alberta, which is really quite important, because there's a big market there; Edmonton and Calgary are both really good for live music."

"So they put in this new liquor law to say you have to be 18 [to play in a bar] in Alberta, and there goes a huge part of our market."

The band put together a makeshift booking at all-ages-friendly space Riverdale Hall, but Sveinson doesn't know if it will be the same—though the

fact that he can casually mention performing at Red's back in the day at only 15 hints at the years of experience already behind him.

After "discovering the art of rock 'n' roll" at the age of six, Sveinson started playing guitar two years later.


"My parents were really hesitant," he explains. "Because there's that whole thing: 'Is he going to give it up in a few weeks? He's eight, he doesn't really have the age where he can grasp the concept and hold onto it?' Lo and behold, here I am."

His throwback sound (and talent) has certainly got Sveinson's name floating around—the budding rocker received even more attention after starring in a documentary, *The Rock and Roll Kid*, at only 11 years old.

The film's massive exposure came with some recoil. Sveinson found plenty of people shrugging him off as nothing more than a youthful gimmick.

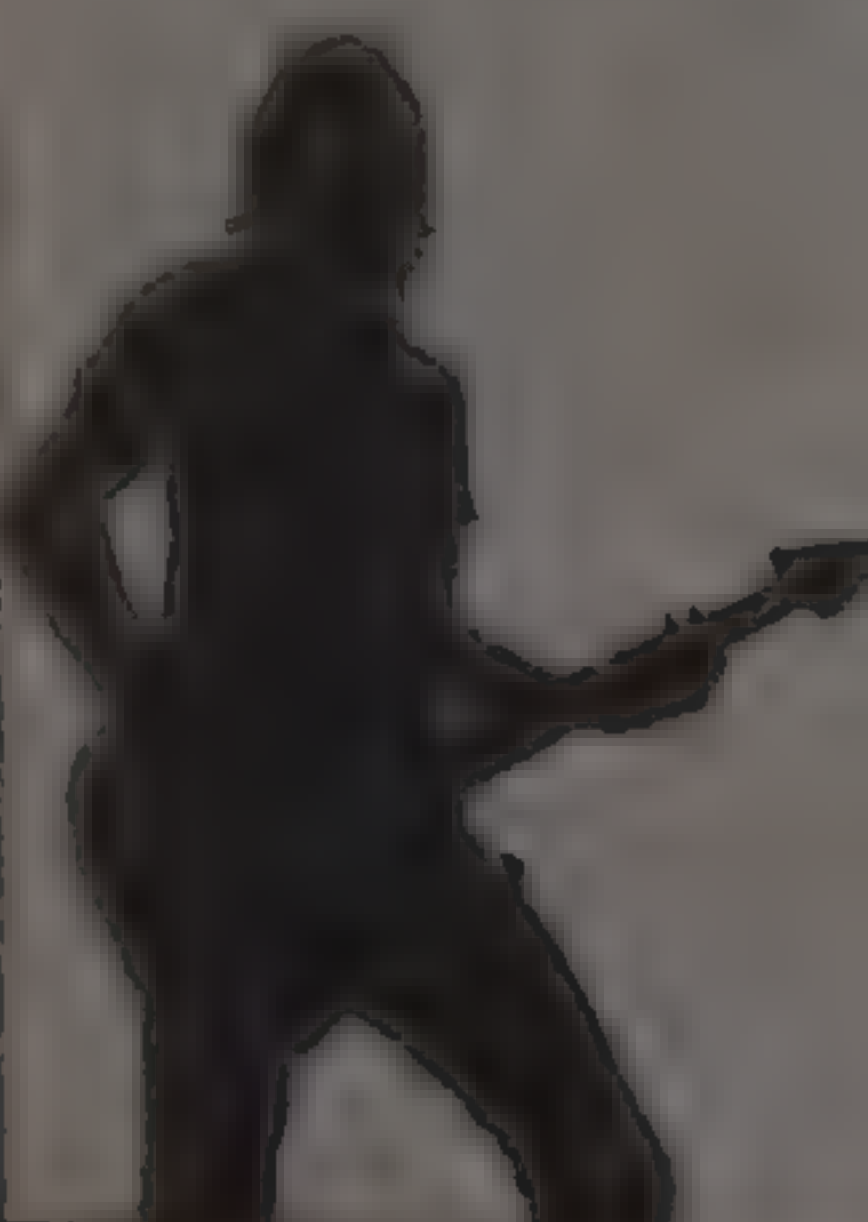
It will still be a few years before they can play any licensed Albertan venues, and until then Sveinson's determined to have people hear Mad Shadow's music first, and check his ID later.

"People give you a chance that way," he says. "People don't go 'OK, they're young guys, we're not even gonna give them a chance.' [If] people think that you're of age, and they don't think you're that young, then they're happy to listen to the music or go see you live. And when they do find out that you're not of age, they don't really care anymore. They realize these guys can actually play, and they've got serious music." ♥

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NEW SOUNDS

Agnostic Mountain Gospel Choir, Ten Thousand (Shoutin' Abner Pim) Calgary's Agnostic Mountain Gospel Choir recorded its third album, *Ten Thousand*, at Sundae Sound Studios in the group's hometown. On the band's website, there's a suggestion in a month-old posting that, *because it was* tracked in a "proper" recording studio, the new record probably won't sound lo-fi.



For fans of the band's previous albums, that's a terrifying notion. Many a group has been polished up only to find that all the life has been swept out of the music. Oh, sure, there are some bands that can take a little cleaning up, clearing the road ahead for the vision that's been clouded by the less-than-clean production.

Turns out that the Mountain Choir doesn't clean up so good after all, though, and that's a relief. There are plenty of musicians around these days who have a certain affinity for old-timey music, but modern recording conventions often get the better of them and the music collapses under the weight of a processed sound.

On *Ten Thousand*, the Mountain Choir's songs creek and crack, groaning and straining not beneath the pressure of proper recording equipment, but under the weight of the whole modern world. It seems that you can take this band out of the lo-fi, but you can't take the lo-fi out of the Choir.

The new record is nothing like a reinvention of the band's sound—the circular rhythms and coarse and ragged chanted vocals are still there at the heart of each track. The Choir sim-

ply focuses on the songs, making each one sound as old as time itself, like the sort of tune that has been handed down between family and friends for generations, and which is only now being captured on tape by some intrepid field-recorder who has marched up and over a hundred hills to find the *beat*.

This band is no one-trick pony, though; push your way into the record and there's a remarkable

degree of subtlety on display as the players work a variety of dynamics into the music with a minimal number of notes, letting the music breathe (and occasionally even gasp and choke).

"Taking It Out" rattles with drum sticks throughout, growing into a rolling monster over the course of three and a half minutes as the vocals growl, "I ain't talkin' with you / I'm taking it out," practically spitting fire with each line.

A few tracks later, "Never Be Dead" sounds a little like something that trickled out of New Orleans and up into the mountains, with a trombone punctuating the jumping rhythm behind the rattling drums and scraping slide guitar. It's not a funeral march, but the spirit is similar—except that the Choir sounds a bit like they might be doing a little less mourning and a little more killing.

Ten Thousand leaves little doubt that the Mountain Choir has more than a little bit of grit in its teeth and grime in its eyes, and it's nice to hear a band that can take the sounds of the mountains and not pretty them up, keeping them alive by leaving them alone. —EDEN MUNRO / eden@vuweekly.com

Adam & the Amethysts, Amethyst Amulet (Pome) The first man of the moniker is Adam Waito of established Montreal-based odd-pop band Miracle Fortress and Telefauna, and the record has the self-assured and quality experience behind it.

Adam & the Amethysts' sound departs from those of Waito's other projects, though—while it sustains flights of fancy demonstrated by Telefauna and the sun-and-surf pop of Miracle Fortress, it's earthier than either, aglow in fuzzy nostalgia and playful layered noises. You can almost smell summer wet concrete, freshly mowed grass and the ripeness of the season spilling from the gentle shuffling rhythm (and inevitable handclaps), brass flourishes, soulful organ and pedal heavy guitar that swaddle Waito's vocals, drenched in winsome recollection and sometimes melancholic observances. The whole effect is rather like someone bashfully piecing together the British Invasion through dimly remembered K-Tel compilation TV ads into a slightly surreal concept album—and it works. —MARY CHRISTA O'KEEFE / marychrista@vuweekly.com

Azeda Booth, In Flesh Tones (Absolutely Kosher) Calgary's scene is enjoying its current reputation as an active bubbling cauldron for wonder. Azeda Booth, having snagged the attention and support of the

tastemaking States-side label Absolutely Kosher Records, is part of a growing body of evidence for the assertion. *In Flesh Tones* is official Azeda Booth's second effort, but given the major additions to the lineup—puffing up from a duo to a sextet since the group's 2004 beginnings, with 2007's *Mysterious* release archiving recordings done by founding pair Morgan Greenwood and Jordon Hossack—it is really more like a debut. The album is a dreamy hybrid of electro, organic and vaguely industrial, the kind of thing that would soundtrack a European film with plenty of dreamy sequences of metropolitan streets falling into dusk and then nighttime halos of blinking lights and blurs of movement blooming like an urban imitation of a garden. It sprawls like a landscape, with a contemporary and international vibe—not knowing better, one would guess that Azeda Booth would be from anywhere big and culture-laden, from London to Sao Paulo. Songs spool out in movements, constructed from sounds that lift from so many styles and locales—Mike Oldfield-style tubular bells, a Detroit beat all cleaned up and softened, dreamy percolation of guitar, stutters of indistinct sound bent to serve a song, for instance, all whipped together in a sleekly lush froth, topped with genderlessly sexy falsetto whispers that trawl between ennui and fantasy. —MARY CHRISTA O'KEEFE / marychrista@vuweekly.com

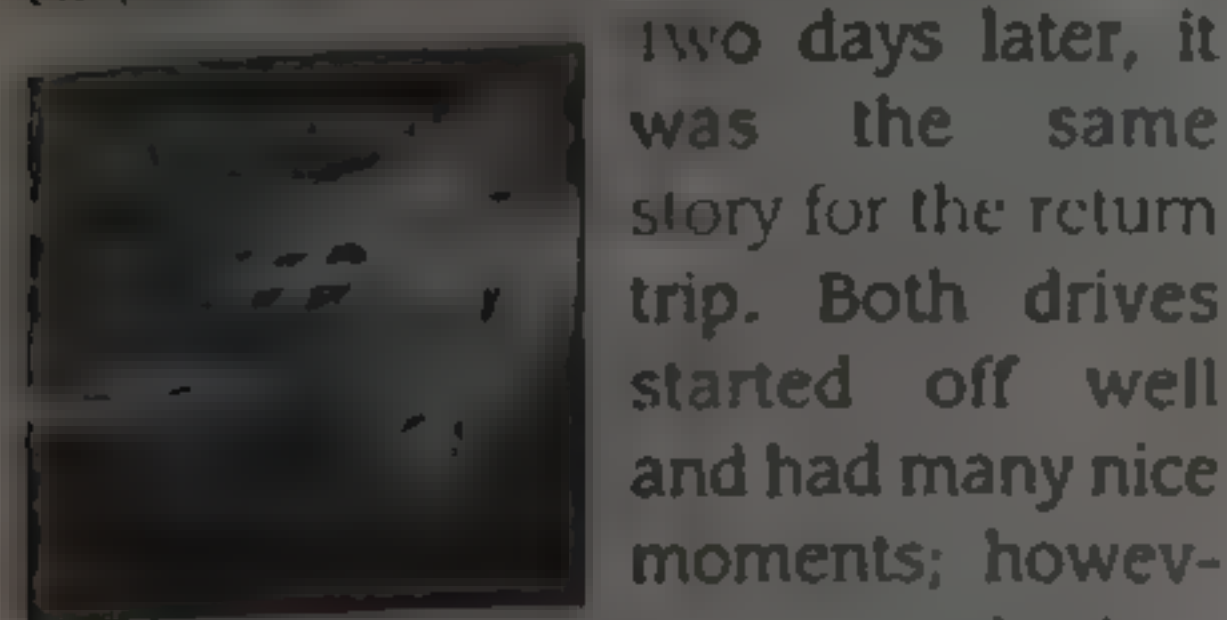
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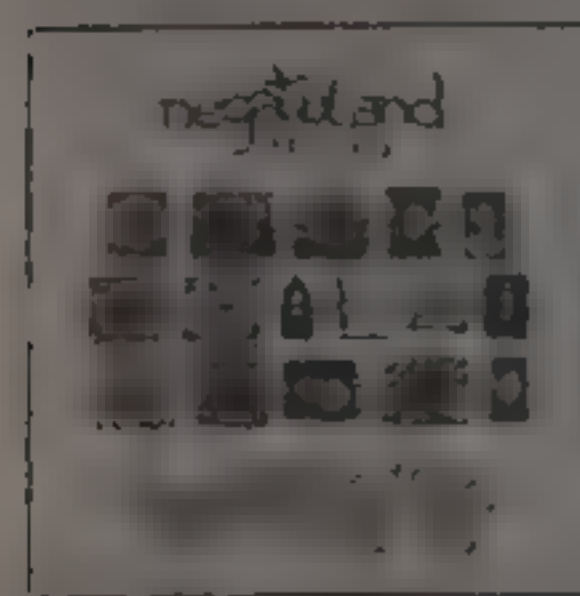
Big Dave McLean, *Got 'Em From the Bottom* (Stony Plain) + *One* (Stony Plain) + *Whispering Big Dave McLean's* name in one day. Sixteen hours in the car, and I drove for about 15 of those.



Two days later, it was the same story for the return trip. Both drives started off well and had many nice moments; however, as my destination approached, I felt exhausted and ready for the end. Listening to *Got 'Em From the Bottom* creates a similar feeling: while many of the individual pieces are impressive on their own, the album itself is way too long, and the final song cannot arrive soon enough. Similarly, some of the individual songs could stand to be much shorter. "Why Do Girls Do That" is one such song, where McLean tries his hand at humorous lyrics. The piece is just shy of four minutes long, and he spends much of that time tediously repeating the refrain. McLean should remember Shakespeare's advice that "brevity is the soul of wit." Brevity certainly has its benefits, and not just for road trips.

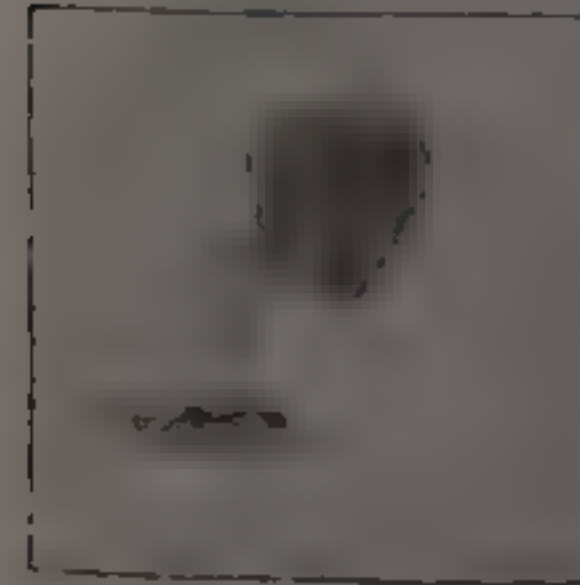
—MARIA KOTOVYCH / maria@vueweekly.com

Negativland Presents, *Thigmotactic* (Seeland) Long before *Adbusters* borrowed their term "culture jamming" and anyone knew what the hell a mashup was, there was San Fran-based sound-



collage experimentalists Negativland. *Thigmotactic*, heralded as the pioneering band's first "song-based" album in its 28-year history, is more of a solo effort by frontman Mark Hosler with rotating backing by other collective members than a true Negativland effort, but it's an accessible, occasionally brilliant intro to their surreal, seemingly acid-inspired lyrics and sound for the uninitiated. Opener "Richard Nixon Died Today" is classic Negativland, using sampled quotes of Ricky Dick over a jangly musical melange to great effect. The album as a whole is, well, weird ... but that's the beauty of Negativland.—SCOTT HARRIS / scott@vueweekly.com

Snailhouse, *Lies on the Prize* (Unfamiliar) "I'm not superstitious but I'm not not superstitious" may just be one of the catchiest lines I've heard all year. Canadian indie artists are breaking the world-renowned artists yet for some reason.



Snailhouse's Mike Feuerstack (aka Snailhouse), who has been making music as far back as 1994, has remained largely unnoticed. While a good chunk of *Lies on the Prize* is a tad too mellow and gloomy ("Tone Deaf Birds" and "Who We Are" to name a few), songs like "(Not) Superstitious" and "They Won't Believe You" pick up the pace and still feel uplifting despite their themes of losing oneself in darkness and losing complete trust in someone to the point where only lies remain. *Lies on the Prize* is a dark, moody, and somewhat depressing album, but it's also a very good one. It's a shame that it's not more widely known.—JULIANA HATHFIELD / juliana@vueweekly.com

MUSIC OLD SOUNDS

Mark Kozelek, *What's Next to the Moon* (Bad Man Recording) Originally released: 2001 Mark Kozelek, of Red House Painters and

Sun Kil Moon, is one of those guys who seems to be happy to do things his way, rather than bending to the will of someone who is looking for a hit-maker. Case in point: Kozelek's 2001 solo full-length, *What's Next to the Moon*. The record opens with quiet, folksy acoustic guitars picking a steady rhythm while Kozelek sings, "Up to my neck in trouble / Up to my neck in strife / Up to my neck in misery / For most of my life."

Now, it's important to note here that Kozelek didn't write those lyrics—and in fact he didn't write any of the words that he sings on *What's Next to the Moon*. The lyrics here all came from the pen of one Ronald Belford Scott, late singer of AC/DC. That's right, this album is a collection of AC/DC covers. Well, sort of. See, Kozelek did write the music, taking Scott's words and transposing them to an environment that is far removed from the zone of crackling electricity where they first appeared.

The effect of this rebirth is remarkable—the opening track loses the tone of frantic desperation that Scott took when delivering his message within the borders of AC/DC's sound. Instead,

Kozelek's approach is one of resignation—not that the war has been lost so much as that life is one of constant battle; regardless of whether or not

one wins the war—what matters in the big scheme of things—what's really important is that you never give up, even when the cause may be lost.

Likewise, "Love at First Feel" is no longer the filthy ditty that Scott's leering vocal conveys, evolving in Kozelek's hands into a tender ballad that flows perfectly into the brief and heart wrenching "Love Hungry Man."

Granted, 10 folksy reworkings of AC/DC tunes is not going to be for everybody—and it's quite likely not going to be for a lot of AC/DC fans, at least not those who buy into cheap rock 'n' roll knock-offs who make careers out of practically photocopied AC/DC sounds—but this is a perfect album for throwing on in the background during a lazy afternoon. And if you're so inclined, *What's Next to the Moon* also offers the perfect opportunity to delve into Scott's lyrics and discover that, despite his reputation as a boozing ladies' man at the front of a sleazy rock 'n' roll band, he had a tendency to wear his heart on his sleeve and in his songs:♥



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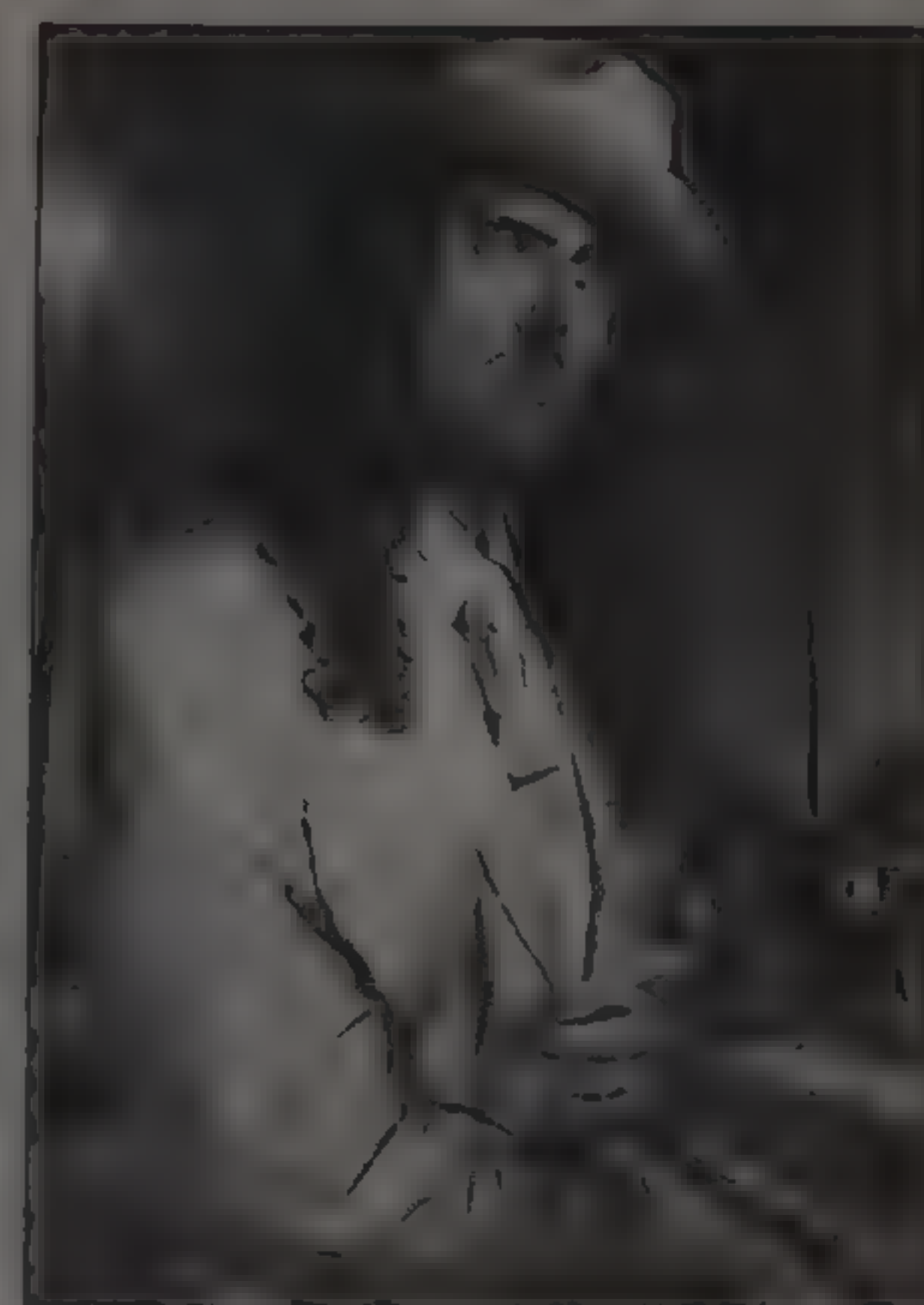
SCOTT HARRIS / scott@vueweekly.com

When **Weird Al Yankovic** released his eponymous first album, Pierre Elliot Trudeau was the prime minister of Canada. The top song on the *Billboard* Hot 100 was "Come on Eileen" by the Dexys Midnight Runners—enjoying a one-week stint at number one between "Billie Jean" and "Beat It," in a year that also saw the likes of Lionel Richie and Bonnie Tyler top the charts.

More than a quarter-century later, while most musical contemporaries of the now-48-year-old accordion-playing parodist have faded into obscurity or infamy, Yankovic is still going strong, a fact that astonishes him more than anyone.

"I'm continually surprised. This was certainly never something that I had anticipated," he laughs over the phone from Ontario, the latest stop on his current summer tour. "I didn't think I'd even be able to make a living doing this, so the fact that my career has outlasted a lot of my contemporaries from when I started out is pretty mindboggling to me."

What's more surprising, especially considering he's sold more than 12 million albums over the years, is that Yankovic is currently enjoying some of his greatest popularity. His latest album, 2006's *Straight Outta Lynwood*, was his first-ever top 10 album and the song "White and Nerdy," a parody



PREVIEW SAT. AUG 2 (8 PM)
WEIRD AL YANKOVIC
CHAMPION LEADER
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of Chamillionaire's "Ridin'," was his first-single to chart in single digits.

"It's extremely validating and gratifying to be peaking in a way this late in my career," he says. "A lot of people 25 years into their career aren't having their biggest success."

AND THE IRONY of a self-admitted nerdy white guy making it big doing

parodies of hip-hop songs just adds to the strangeness of the situation. Despite receiving accolades for his rapping ability from Chamillionaire, Yankovic questions his urban chop.

"I just gave it my best shot. I don't know what I did. I'm pretty good at emulating people and people's styles. And I'm pretty obsessive-compulsive about fine-tuning things and getting the details just right. I don't know. I don't think I'm a skilled rapper, but I make an effort as strong of an effort as I possibly can. That was always sort of the joke to me: I don't really dance like Michael Jackson, but the fact that this awkward white guy is trying as hard as he can to dance like Michael Jackson in and of itself I always thought was pretty funny."

While he's certainly proud of his success and longevity, he admits that it has a lot to do with the advantages that come with the unique position he occupies in the industry.

"The nice part about my job description is that I'm allowed to shamelessly follow everything that happens in pop culture and leech off of it and I'm not considered a sellout, because that's what I do," he says with a chuckle. "So, pretty much by definition I'm able to stay relevant because I follow whatever happens in the music scene." ▀

ZODIAC FREE WILL ASTROLOGY
BORN FREEZKY
freewill@vueweekly.com

ARIES (MAR 21 - APR 19)

Work can be hazardous for the actors who portray cartoon and fairy tale characters at Disney theme parks. The US Health and Safety Administration reports that one-third of them have suffered on-the-job injuries. A prime cause of the mayhem: kids who kick and punch, sometimes out of misplaced exuberance and other times out of *Lord of the Flies*-style malice. I wanted to preface my advice to you with that story, Aries. Your assignment this week is to summon the angelic 85 per cent of your inner child to come out and play. As for the other 15 per cent—the part of your inner child that might be inclined to pummel Mickey Mouse or headbutt Cinderella: keep that rascal under wraps.

TAURUS (APR 20 - MAY 20)

Sometimes hope is an irrelevant waste of time, even a stupid self-indulgence. Let's say, for instance, that I'm really hoping that a certain disagreeable person I've got to communicate with won't answer when I call on the phone. That way I can simply leave a message on his voice mail and avoid an unpleasant exchange. But it doesn't matter what I hope. The guy will either answer or not, regardless of what I want. But there is another kind of hope that's invigorating and transformative. Let's say I have a hope that we humans will reverse the environmental catastrophes we're perpetrating. Let's say that my hope motivates me to live more sustainably and to inspire others to live more sustainably. Then my hope is a catalyst.

Meditate on these things, Taurus. It's a perfect time for you to get very clear about the two kinds of hope.

GEMINI (MAY 21 - JUN 20)

The Futurist magazine predicts that by 2025, there'll be a billion millionaires in the world. I hope you will be one of them. If you do end up in that fortunate position, it may well be because of the smart, aggressive actions you initiate in the next four months. Cosmic tendencies are in place for you to ensure your prosperity well into the future; now all you have to do is understand and capitalize on those tendencies. Here's a good place to start: spend some quality time taking inventory of your financial life and brainstorming about a 17-year plan to make you a millionaire.

CANCER (JUN 21 - JUL 22)

The world record for attaching clothespins to one's face is 153. Even if you're tempted to surpass that mark, I beg you not to. Inflicting pain on yourself in order to impress someone or prove a point is never a good idea, but it's an especially misguided notion right now. I wouldn't object, however, if you did the opposite, which is to barrage yourself with pleasure in order to impress someone or prove a point. In my astrological opinion, it's a perfect time to intensify your commitment to making yourself feel good. This is true for many reasons, but here's one of the most important ones: it will have a magically tonic effect on your relationships with others.

LEO (JUL 23 - AUG 22)

I would love to see you walking down the street dressed in a feathered headdress and white boots and leopard-print cash-

mere pants, plus maybe some scarlet velvet gloves and a silk T-shirt that says, "You don't scare me." To present yourself in such a bold and forthright manner would be in perfect alignment with your astrological omens. If that particular form of expression doesn't feel right to you, please find an equivalent that does.

VIRGO (AUG 23 - SEP 22)

Could you get access to a crane with a wrecking ball? How about a chainsaw or sledgehammer? Metaphorically speaking, you may need some heavy equipment to do all the demolition work that's necessary right now. Among the structures that could be due for destruction: a mental block you've been preserving out of perverse nostalgia, a prison cell you lock yourself inside on your off days, a half-built bridge you're no longer interested in or capable of completing a pedestal on which your fallen idol used to stand and a door you nailed shut in order to seal yourself off from a person with whom you still have unfinished business.

LIBRA (SEP 23 - OCT 22)

This is your best chance in a long time to meet people you've always wanted to meet. It's also a favourable time to turn pretty good connections into excellent collaborations, and to adjust your role in your web of alliances so it's closer to where you want it to be. None of these fine developments in your social life will magically unfold on their own, however. You can't just sit back passively and hope that cosmic forces will somehow make them happen. So formulate your intentions crisply and act aggressively to manifest them.

SCORPIO (OCT 23 - NOV 21)

Don't just shamle down to the pizzeria and gobble a slab of greasy cheese, tomato sauce and dough. Instead, arrange for an interesting person who likes you to home-deliver a pizza lovingly prepared by a gourmet chef. For that matter, Scorpio, don't tolerate mediocrity or the lowest common denominator in any area of your life. The Season of the Peak Experience is here—a time when you have a sacred duty to give your best, commune with the highest and ask for excellence.

SAGITTARIUS (NOV 22 - DEC 21)

I don't recommend that you go on a spiritual retreat at the Zen monastery near Mount Kumgang in North Korea. As exquisite as the place is, the repressive government's secret police are suspicious of tourists and would probably make your trip miserable. No, Sagittarius, while it is an excellent time to leave your familiar haunts and expose yourself to exotic scenes, you should be acutely discerning about where you go. In my opinion, you need a sanctuary that simultaneously surprises you and deepens your sense of being at home in the world.

CAPRICORN (DEC 22 - JAN 19)

"You have to love life when you're in really deep trouble," said poet Robin Blaser. So what about if, on the other hand, you're in only shallow trouble? Do you have a mandate to just sort of like life a little more? Or can you, with a little work, exploit the mild disturbance that the shallow trouble provides in order to dramatically pump up your adoration of life? I hope that your actions in the coming week, Capricorn, will be a big "yes" in response to that question. I'm happy to

tell you that you can wangle a big boner from a small inconvenience.

AQUARIUS (JAN 20 - FEB 18)

Some bars are now charging fines to people who drunkenly puke on their floors. I advise you to stay out of such places in the coming week. Better yet, don't get so wasted that you hurl anywhere. It's one of those rare periods when every little sin will be quickly punished, when every excess will provoke an equal and opposite reaction. On the other hand, this is also a time when even minor eruptions of virtue will be immediately rewarded, when every brave act and self-disciplined shift will bring you an opportunity.

PISCES (FEB 19 - MAR 20)

Two friends of mine, a couple engaged to be wed, rode their bicycles for days up the Northern California coast from San Francisco to Oregon. They saw many other riders pedalling from north to south during their trip, but they rarely encountered anyone heading in the same direction they were. Why? The wind was blowing against them the entire way. When they stopped to rest they would sometimes meet and talk with bicyclists whose destination was San Francisco. "Why are you riding against the wind?" the other travellers inevitably wanted to know. My friends enjoyed replying, "We're building our characters so we'll be strong enough to stay in love after we're married." They're your role models for the coming weeks, Pisces. Do some against-the-wind work to prepare yourself for your next big assignment, which is to make your intimate relationships more interesting and invigorating and enduring. ▀

Ivan E Coyote, supergenius

QUEERMONTON

Ivan E Coyote was in town last week as the artist-in-residence at Camp fyrefly. From going to Ivan's amazing writing workshop, I also saw him perform two great pieces and was able to interview her. Notice that? See that's the thing, even though I spent four days with Ivan, I'm still not sure which gender pronoun I should be using. Ivan seems to mostly live in that gender in-between which is totally okay with me, but can make writing tricky. Trying to relate things without a handy "he" or "she" is tough because we don't have a widely accepted third option. That's really too bad because whether Ivan is male or female or both or neither, this interview remains unchanged. Ivan's an amazing performer and writer and I'm

pretty sure that's all that matters.

QUEERMONTON: Do you consider yourself a writer or a storyteller? And is there a difference?

IVAN COYOTE: Well I think I'm both. There's differences but there's a lot of crossover. A lot of great writers are storytellers, not all storytellers write stuff down but it doesn't mean that they're not writing, they've got to still construct the story. Storytelling is a largely oral tradition historically. That was their earliest form of writing; before there was the concept of writing, things were passed down orally.

Q: How and when did you get into writing?

IC: I've always written since I was a kid—journal after journal after journal. Late elementary school angst followed closely by junior high school angst. Grade 7 is when I first remember writing a story that I was really stoked about. I remember that

tingly feeling that I spent most of my life searching for again of creating something that was totally my own construction, that was completely for me, and I've been really excited about this whole other world that I could create and then envelope myself in. I had a brief and unsuccessful career as a lesbian folk singer in my early 20s and then I realized I was actually better at the banter than the actual song writing or singing.

Q: Is there any evidence of that floating around anywhere?

IC: Thankfully no, I don't believe so. I think before my house fire there was a poster, but hopefully, no.

And then somewhere in 1995 I'd say, I started doing public readings. I don't remember the first one oddly enough, I just remember all of a sudden I was doing it. In 1996 I co-founded Taste This, which was a storytelling troupe with three other artists in Vancouver: Anna Camilleri, Lyndell Montgomery and Zoë Eakle. We did a live show at the Grunt Gallery and we were approached by Press Gang

Publishers afterwards to see if we would want to do a sort of page version of our stage show. That book became *Boys Like Her*. It came out in 1998, went on to do really well, great reviews.

Then again I got approached by a guy who worked for Arsenal Pulp Press. They asked to see a manuscript, it took them six or seven months to get back to me and they turned it down. So I did some edits and some changes on it, sent it back in and that book became *Close to Spiderman* in 2000. *One Man's Trash* came out in 2002. I started doing a lot of storytelling with music, I released *You're a Nation*—which is the first CD project I did—in

I started writing a column for *Xtra West* in 2001, and my first collection of columns came out in 2005 as *Loose End*. In 2006 was my novel [*Bow Grip*], 2007 was my second CD project, *You Are Here*. It was a collaboration with Rae Spoon, a bluegrass musician from Alberta, great singer-songwriter and a story cycle of mine recorded live at the Yukon Arts Centre in March of 2007.

Q: What are some of the things you're doing right now?

IC: I'm loosely collecting live recordings with me and live musicians. I like the musical collaborations. I'm working with bassist/violinist Lyndell Montgomery on some stuff. I've done a couple recordings with Veda (Hille). I hope to work with a punk-rock cello player out of Vancouver that I've done some shows named Chris Dirksen. I've done a couple gigs with Dan Mangan, who's a great singer-songwriter and I hope to do a recording with him. So some time in the next year, two years, I'd like to release another CD of all live recordings. It's hard to get a decent recording but there's something about live, it's hard to capture the energy of a live show in a studio setting. And *The Slow Fix* will be out this fall, so I'll be touring that. I'm waiting to hear back on a grant on another project which is similar to a *You Are Here* CD project, it's another sort of Yukon history project. And I'm working on my novel

Look for the second half of my talk with Ivan in two weeks. ▽

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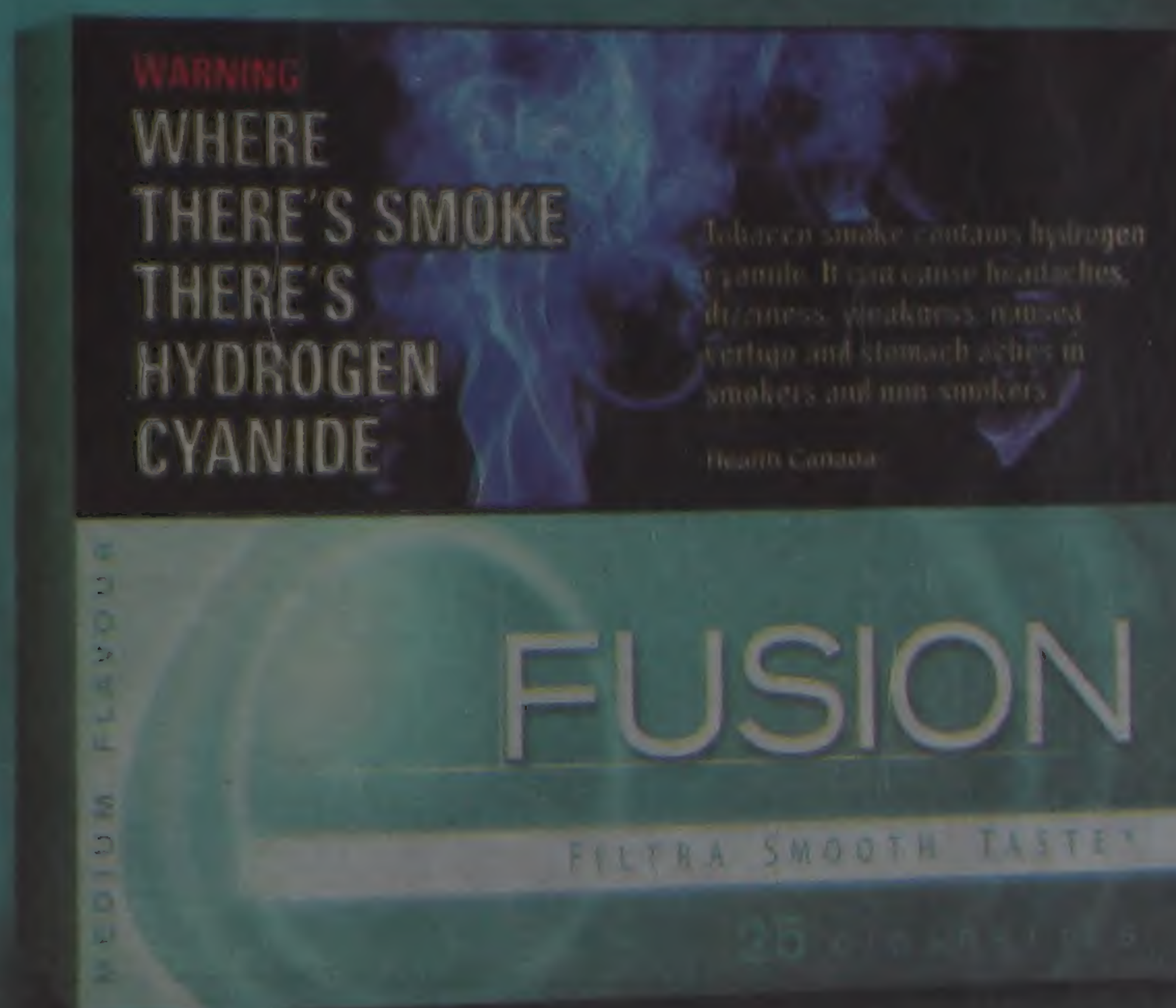
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The aftermeth

ADVICE **ALT.SEX.COLUMN**
ANDREA NEMERSON
altsex@altsexcolumn.com

DEAR ANDREA:

My husband was a secret methamphetamine user since the mid '80s. He had issues with depression and repressed anger but I had no idea that drugs had so much to do with everything that's happened. We've always allowed each other a lot of space so it was easy for him to hide his use and the spending that went with it.

Six months ago he finally got tired of the lies and the fear (random drug testing at work) and started rehab, and I feel I'm starting to get the man I married back. However, his libido, his confidence, his erections and our sex life are all gone. He just recently confessed that he was high every time we had sex for the last 10 years or so and now

that juice is gone. Blood pressure medication is compounding the problem.

Considering the number of people who never had sex without drugs and are now sober, there is precious little information about sex after sobriety. Most of what I found ran to "you just need to get over the fear." It was all pretty much about having to figure it out for yourself, and nothing mentioned prescription meds. I don't know, maybe everyone really does have to find his or her own way back?

Despite some of the drug and depression-related behaviours my husband has exhibited over the years, he is a wonderful man with many wonderful qualities, and I love him very much. I could live without the sex, (my libido isn't what it used to be either), but it does make me sad to think of leaving this world without ever making love with him again. The fact that it was drug enhanced didn't make it any less great.

Is there any good information out there about sex after sobriety, especially after uppers? He's afraid he burned out his circuits with the drugs. I don't know what to think. Maybe six months isn't enough time to expect a transition to "normal" functioning. Going back to drugs is certainly no solution. Is there anything that can help in this situation? Trying to have a sex life without meth and with high BP meds ... maybe it's too much to ask.

LOVE, AFTERMETH

DEAR AFTER:

I could answer this myself but why bother when my friend the therapist, whose practice consists largely of men whose sex lives were first fuelled and then derailed by meth and subsequent sobriety is willing to take it on? I warn you that Adam is not given to sugar-coating things but he does know what he's talking about.

There's a huge public health effort to convince people that sex without meth is great: "It's so much more (intense, intimate, meaningful, etc) without drugs." The truth is that, for many folks, post-

meth sex will be less compelling than sex on meth, and that's just the way it is. Brain chemistry versus ad campaigns: brain chemistry wins. If you start with that, you'll have better chances of having a satisfying (though possibly never again as mind-blowing) sex life. Modest expectations = better odds of success.

For some people, this improves after the first year or so. It takes about that long for your brain to get back on track making the appropriate endogenous chemicals, and once they're back on their own internal meds, a lot of folks experience a return of libido. If he is only six months sober, don't expect much yet.

I usually recommend starting really, really slowly. He can try jacking off a little, work up to jacking off together, eventually do some oral. Go slow, and leave the intercourse until he really, really wants it.

Viagra can be helpful in a reverse kind of way. Viagra itself won't help with low sexual desire, but absence of libido plus Viagra plus calm environment plus stimulation = hard-on, which often leads to some kind of sexual activity, which then often

leads to a return of some level of desire. If a heart condition is a factor, no Viagra without doctor's permission. Try some Alprostadil (a prescription erection aid that doesn't affect blood pressure), if needed.

Short version: start with gentle, no-expectations stimulation, don't expect much for the first year, and see how it goes. —Adam Zimbardo

I'd add to that suggesting that your husband talk to his doctor about the meds; it's possible that an adjustment might make a difference. And I do think it's worth asking for Viagra or similar. The worst that can happen is the doc says no. I promise he or she will not recoil with horror, gasping. "Sex with your wife? Why ever would you want me to help you have that?"

I think it's kind of criminal that people are expected to get and stay sober with so little warning that their entire sex, love, and intimacy pyramid might collapse, crash and burn in the aftermath, and so little information on how to rebuild it. Hope this helps.

LOVE, ANDREA

ARTIST TO ARTIST

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Volunteers needed to help out with the **Bike Lock Up** at the **Heritage Festival** in Hawrelak Park on **Aug. 2-4.** email volunteer@edmontonbikes.ca or call 780-582-2502

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Edmonton Multicultural Stars Festival, Aug. 29-30. The youth planning committee meets every Fri at 5:30pm at 208, 10010-107A Ave for info or to volunteer, call Jennifer, Action for Healthy Communities, 780-944-4687

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Plant a garden row for Meals on Wheels Looking for help with fresh produce during the summer. Drop off produce 11111-103 Ave, 8am-3pm weekdays, www.mealsonwheelsedmonton.org

The Edmonton International Baseball Foundation is looking for volunteers to assist in the hosting of the IBAF World Junior AAA Baseball Championship (**July 25-Aug. 3**). Call the E.I.B.F. Tournament Office 488-2225

Volunteer website for youth 14-24 years old. www.youthvolunteer.ca

Volunteer for Canadian Francophone Games Edmonton 2008 (JFC). **Aug. 14-17**, English speaking volunteers are welcome. For info visit www.jeuxcf.ca

Volunteers for **The Edmonton Dragon Boat Festival, Aug. 22-24**, at the Louise McKinney Riverfront Park. Many positions: bear gardens, merchandise, volunteer, and performer tents and more. Free t-shirt, hat, meals, prizes. A post appreciation party at the Lingnan. Sheila edbfa07@gmail.com; visit www.edbfa.ca and download an application

The Calgary Reggae Festival Society is looking for volunteers (**Aug. 16, 2008**). www.CalgaryReggaeFestival.com, fill in the on-line form or T. 403-355-5696/403-462-7101

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Hope Mission call for the summer, need water bottles to hand out throughout downtown's inner city. Drop-off at 9908-106 Ave, call 422-2018

Trout Unlimited's Yellow Fish Road Program Looking for volunteers interested in the environment and aquatic ecosystems. Volunteers paint yellow fish on storm drains in Edmonton neighborhoods. E. krolheiser@tucanada.org

SERVICES

SACE—Public Education Program: Sexual Assault Centre of Edmonton (www.sace.ab.ca) provides crisis intervention, information, counseling, public education services. For a customized presentation T: 423-4102/F: 421-8734/E: info@sace.ab.ca; www.sace.ab.ca/24 Hour Crisis Line: 423-4121

Canadian Mental Health Association, www.cmha-edmonton.ab.ca Education Program is pleased to offer workshops to give you the skills to intervene with people who may be at risk for suicide. **Follow the links to ASIST or call 414-6341**

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